

# Traffic Safety Facts

2020 Data

September 2022

DOT HS 813 369



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**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

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## Summary of Motor Vehicle Crashes

### Key Findings

- In 2020 there were an estimated 5,250,837 police-reported traffic crashes in which 38,824 people were killed and an estimated 2,282,015 people were injured.
- Compared to 2019 there was a 6.8-percent increase in fatalities, but a 16.7-percent decrease in the estimated number of people injured in 2020. The estimated number of police-reported crashes declined 22.3 percent from 2019 to 2020.
- On average, one person was killed every 14 minutes and an estimated 4 people were injured every minute in traffic crashes in 2020.
- The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) increased from 1.11 in 2019 to 1.34 in 2020.
- In 2020 there were 11,654 people killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes, an average of one alcohol-impaired-driving fatality every 45 minutes. Fatalities in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes increased by 14.3 percent from 2019 to 2020.
- The number of speeding-related fatalities in 2020 increased by 17 percent from 2019, from 9,592 to 11,258.
- On average, a pedestrian was killed every 81 minutes and injured every 10 minutes in traffic crashes in 2020.
- Of the 1,093 children killed in traffic crashes, 229 (21%) were killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes in 2020.
- Young drivers accounted for 8.5 percent of all drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2020. However, young drivers were only 5.1 percent of all licensed drivers in 2020.
- In 2020 there were 6,549 people 65 and older killed in traffic crashes in the United States, accounting for 17 percent of all traffic fatalities. From 2019 to 2020 there was a 10-percent decrease in the number of people 65 and older killed in traffic crashes.
- Forty-one percent of motorcycle riders who died in single-vehicle crashes in 2020 were alcohol-impaired.

This fact sheet contains information on fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) and non-fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes from the National Automotive Sampling System (NASS) General Estimates System (GES) and Crash Report Sampling System (CRSS). A change instituted with the release of 2020 data is rounding estimates to the nearest whole number instead of the nearest thousand for all police-reported crashes, including injury estimates. Refer to the end of this publication for more information on FARS, NASS GES, and CRSS.

A motor vehicle traffic crash is defined as an incident that involved one or more motor vehicles in transport that originated on a public trafficway, such as a road or highway. Crashes that occurred on private property, including parking lots and driveways, are excluded. The terms “motor vehicle traffic crash” and “traffic crash” are used interchangeably.

## Overview

Motor vehicle travel is a major means of transportation in the United States, providing an unparalleled degree of mobility. Traffic crashes took the lives of 38,824 people in 2020. The mission of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is to save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce economic costs due to road traffic crashes, through education, research, safety standards, and enforcement.

## 10-Year Trend: 2011 to 2020

The number of police-reported traffic crashes, by crash severity, is presented in Table 1 for the 10-year period 2011 to 2020. From 2011 to 2020 the number of fatal crashes increased 19.8 percent. Recently, the number of fatal crashes has increased by 6.8 percent from 2019 to 2020, while the estimated number of police-reported crashes fell by 22.3 percent.

Table 1  
Police-Reported Crashes, by Crash Severity, 2011–2020

Year	Crash Severity						Total	
	Fatal		Injury		Property-Damage-Only			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2011	29,867	0.6%	1,529,968	28.7%	3,777,994	70.8%	5,337,829	100.0%
2012	31,006	0.6%	1,634,180	29.1%	3,949,858	70.3%	5,615,045	100.0%
2013	30,202	0.5%	1,591,016	28.0%	4,065,673	71.5%	5,686,891	100.0%
2014	30,056	0.5%	1,647,726	27.2%	4,386,502	72.3%	6,064,284	100.0%
2015	32,538	0.5%	1,715,394	27.2%	4,548,203	72.2%	6,296,134	100.0%
2016*	34,748	0.5%	2,116,308	31.0%	4,670,073	68.5%	6,821,129	100.0%
2017*	34,560	0.5%	1,888,525	29.3%	4,529,513	70.2%	6,452,598	100.0%
2018*	33,919	0.5%	1,893,704	28.1%	4,807,058	71.4%	6,734,681	100.0%
2019*	33,487	0.5%	1,916,344	28.4%	4,806,253	71.1%	6,756,084	100.0%
2020*	35,766	0.7%	1,593,390	30.3%	3,621,681	69.0%	5,250,837	100.0%

Sources: FARS 2011–2019 Final File, 2020 Annual Report File (ARF); NASS GES 2011–2015; CRSS 2016–2020

\*CRSS estimates and NASS GES estimates are not comparable due to different sample designs. Refer to end of document for more information about CRSS.

While Table 1 presents data on crashes, Table 2 presents data on people killed and injured in traffic crashes in the 10-year period 2011 to 2020. Also presented are the fatality and injury rates based on population, licensed drivers, registered vehicles, and VMT. Figure 1 shows a map of the fatality rate per 100 million VMT for each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

In 2020 there were 38,824 people killed and an estimated 2,282,015 people injured in traffic crashes. Compared to 2019, this was a 6.8-percent increase in the number of fatalities, but a 16.7-percent decrease in the estimated number of people injured. Over the decade 2011 to 2020, there was a 19.5-percent increase in the number of those killed in traffic crashes. On average in 2020 there were 106 people who died each day and

an estimated 6,235 people who were injured each day in traffic crashes. This translates to one person killed every 14 minutes and an estimated 4 people injured every minute in traffic crashes in 2020.

After a recent high of 37,806 fatalities in 2016, there has been an annual decrease in the number of deaths on our Nation’s highways from 2017 to 2019, until the increase in 2020. The fatality rate per 100 million VMT increased from 1.11 in 2019 to 1.34 in 2020. In the 10-year period 2011 to 2020 the fatality rate per 100 million VMT fluctuated from a low of 1.08 in 2014 to a high of 1.34 in 2020. The fatality rates based on population, licensed drivers, and registered vehicles also increased from 2019 to 2020. The injury rate per 100 million VMT was 84 in 2019, but decreased to 79 in 2020.

Table 2

**People Killed and Injured, and Fatality and Injury Rates per Population, Licensed Drivers, Registered Vehicles, and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), 2011–2020**

Year	Killed	Population	Fatality Rate per 100,000 Population	Licensed Drivers	Fatality Rate per 100,000 Licensed Drivers	Registered Motor Vehicles	Fatality Rate per 100,000 Registered Vehicles	Vehicle Miles Traveled (millions)	Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT
<b>Killed</b>									
2011	32,479	311,583,481	10.42	211,874,649	15.33	265,043,362	12.25	2,945,194	1.10
2012	33,782	313,877,662	10.76	211,814,830	15.95	265,647,194	12.72	2,963,497	1.14
2013	32,893	316,059,947	10.41	212,159,728	15.50	269,294,302	12.21	2,982,941	1.10
2014	32,744	318,386,329	10.28	214,092,472	15.29	274,804,904	11.92	3,020,377	1.08
2015	35,484	320,738,994	11.06	218,084,465	16.27	281,312,446	12.61	3,089,841	1.15
2016	37,806	323,071,755	11.70	221,711,918	17.05	288,033,900	13.13	3,173,815	1.19
2017	37,473	325,122,128	11.53	225,346,257	16.63	290,335,891	12.91	3,210,248	1.17
2018	36,835	326,838,199	11.27	227,558,385	16.19	297,036,214	12.40	3,240,327	1.14
2019	36,355	328,329,953	11.07	228,915,520	15.88	299,267,114	12.15	3,261,772	1.11
2020	38,824	329,484,123	11.78	228,195,802	17.01	297,644,334	13.04	2,903,622	1.34
<b>Injured</b>									
Year	Injured	Population	Injury Rate per 100,000 Population	Licensed Drivers	Injury Rate per 100,000 Licensed Drivers	Registered Motor Vehicles	Injury Rate per 100,000 Registered Vehicles	Vehicle Miles Traveled (millions)	Injury Rate per 100 Million VMT
2011	2,227,209	311,583,481	715	211,874,649	1,051	265,043,362	840	2,945,194	76
2012	2,369,083	313,877,662	755	211,814,830	1,118	265,647,194	892	2,963,497	80
2013	2,318,992	316,059,947	734	212,159,728	1,093	269,294,302	861	2,982,941	78
2014	2,342,621	318,386,329	736	214,092,472	1,094	274,804,904	852	3,020,377	78
2015	2,454,778	320,738,994	765	218,084,465	1,126	281,312,446	873	3,089,841	79
2016*	3,061,885	323,071,755	948	221,711,918	1,381	288,033,900	1,063	3,173,815	96
2017*	2,745,268	325,122,128	844	225,346,257	1,218	290,335,891	946	3,210,248	86
2018*	2,710,059	326,838,199	829	227,558,385	1,191	297,036,214	912	3,240,327	84
2019*	2,740,141	328,329,953	835	228,915,520	1,197	299,267,114	916	3,261,772	84
2020*	2,282,015	329,484,123	693	228,195,802	1,000	297,644,334	767	2,903,622	79

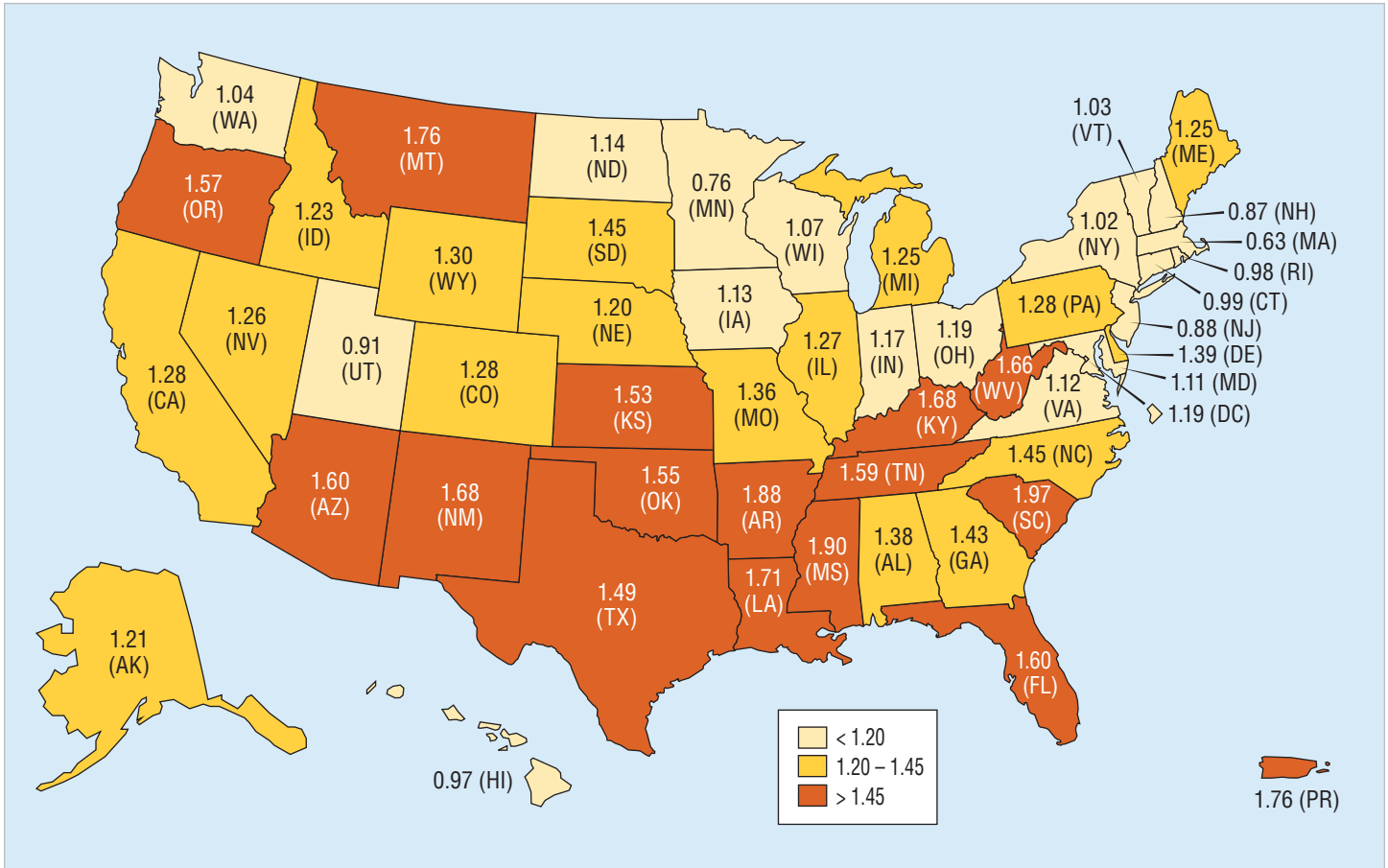
Sources: FARS 2011–2019 Final File, 2020 ARF; NASS GES 2011–2015; CRSS 2016–2020; VMT and Licensed Drivers — Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); Registered Vehicles — R. L. Polk & Co., and FHWA; Population — Census Bureau

\*CRSS estimates and NASS GES estimates are not comparable due to different sample designs. Refer to end of document for more information about CRSS.

In 2020 the highest fatality rate per 100 million VMT in the United States (50 States and the District of Columbia, excluding Puerto Rico) was in South Carolina (1.97) followed by

Mississippi (1.90). The lowest was in Massachusetts (0.63) followed by Minnesota (0.76).

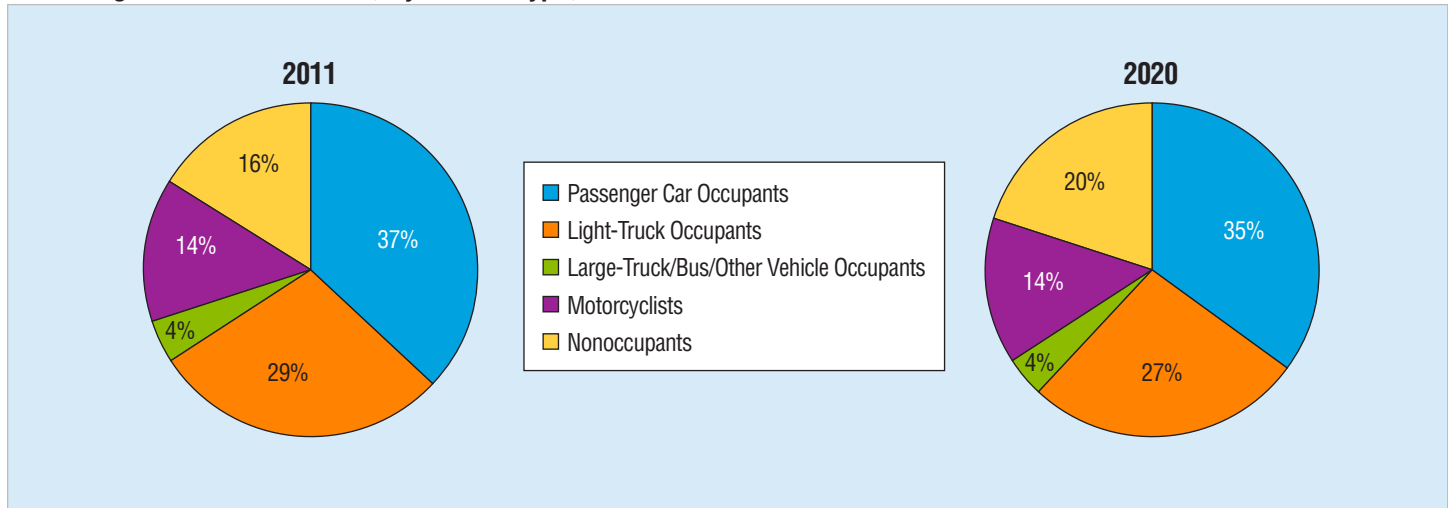
Figure 1  
**Fatality Rates per 100 Million VMT, by State, 2020**



Sources: FARS 2020 ARF; VMT — FHWA

Fatalities by person type in 2011 and 2020 are shown in Figure 2. The portion of nonoccupant (pedestrians, bicyclists, other cyclists, and other nonoccupants) fatalities increased from 16 percent to 20 percent, which was the largest percentage-point increase from 2011 to 2020. The passenger car occupant fatalities decreased from 37 percent of the fatalities in 2011 to 35 percent in 2020, light-truck occupant fatalities decreased from 29 percent to 27 percent of fatalities, and motorcyclist and large-truck fatalities were unchanged at 14 and 4 percent of total traffic fatalities, respectively.

Figure 2  
Percentage of Traffic Fatalities, by Person Type, 2011 and 2020



Source: FARS 2011 Final File, 2020 ARF

## Traffic Safety Fact Sheets

The National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA) annually publishes a series of Traffic Safety Fact Sheets, brief reports on subjects of interest to the traffic safety community. Currently 16 fact sheets are available. There are two fact sheets that focus on State data only. Some cover driver or occupant behavior such as alcohol-impaired driving, speeding, and occupant protection. Others focus on populations of interest, such as pedestrians, bicyclists and other cyclists, children, young drivers, and older population. Specific vehicle types are the emphasis in fact sheets on passenger vehicles, large trucks, motorcycles, and school transportation. The Rural/Urban Comparison fact sheet focuses on the locations of the crashes. Finally, this fact sheet, 2020 Summary of Motor Vehicle Crashes provides a brief summary for each of these fact sheets, along with links and references for further information.

## State

The 2020 State Traffic Data Fact Sheet includes a range of topics such as fatality rates, speeding-related crashes, and crash types. The 2020 State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates fact sheet focuses on alcohol at the State level and includes the range of known alcohol test results for drivers involved in fatal crashes.

ties decreased from 37 percent of the fatalities in 2011 to 35 percent in 2020, light-truck occupant fatalities decreased from 29 percent to 27 percent of fatalities, and motorcyclist and large-truck fatalities were unchanged at 14 and 4 percent of total traffic fatalities, respectively.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 State Traffic Data Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813368.pdf>.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813301.pdf>.

## Behavior

Driver behavior such as driving while impaired and speeding, as well as whether passenger vehicle occupants are wearing seat belts, are important areas of interest. These behaviors are the subjects of this set of traffic safety fact sheets.

### Alcohol-Impaired Driving

Drivers are considered to be alcohol-impaired when their blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) are .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. In 2020 there were 11,654 people killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes, an average of one alcohol-impaired-driving fatality every 45 minutes. These alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities accounted for 30 percent of the total traffic fatalities in the United States.

Fatalities in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes increased by 14.3 percent (10,196 to 11,654 fatalities) from 2019 to 2020.

In 2020, among the 11,654 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities, 67 percent (7,831) were in crashes in which at least one driver had a BAC of .15 g/dL or higher.

The percentages of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2020 was the highest for motorcycle riders (27%), compared to drivers of passenger cars (23%), light trucks (19%), and large trucks (3%).

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813294.pdf>.

### *Speeding*

In 2020 there were 11,258 fatalities in crashes where at least one driver was speeding, 29 percent of total traffic fatalities for the year. There were an estimated 308,013 people injured (13% of total people injured) in speeding-related crashes that same year.

The number of speeding-related fatalities in 2020 increased by 17 percent from 2019, from 9,592 to 11,258.

Thirty-five percent of male drivers in the 15- to 20-year-old age group and 18 percent of female drivers in both 15- to 20-year-old and 21- to 24-year-old age groups involved in fatal crashes in 2020 were speeding, the highest among the age groups.

Drivers who were speeding when involved in fatal crashes in 2020 were found to have blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) of .08 g/dL or greater than those drivers not speeding (37% versus 17%)—or even higher BACs of .15 g/dL or greater (25% versus 11%)—than those drivers who were not speeding.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Speeding Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813320.pdf>.

### *Occupant Protection*

According to NHTSA's National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) for 2020 (Report No. DOT HS 813 072), the estimated seat belt use rate over the decade 2011 to 2020 increased from 83.8 percent in 2011 to 90.3 percent in 2020.

There were 38,824 traffic fatalities in the United States in 2020, of which 23,824 (61%) were occupants of passenger vehicles. Of the 23,824 passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2020, there were 10,483 (44%) who were restrained and 10,893 (46%) who were unrestrained at the time of the crashes. Considering only passenger vehicle occupant fatalities whose restraint use was known, 49 percent were restrained and 51 percent were unrestrained.

In traffic crashes in 2020, considering known driver restraint use by passenger vehicle type, 61 percent of pickup drivers who were killed were unrestrained, compared to 52 percent of SUV drivers, 47 percent of passenger car drivers, and 44 percent of van drivers.

In 2017 seat belts saved an estimated 14,955 lives among passenger vehicle occupants 5 and older (latest data available).

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Occupant Protection Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813326.pdf>.

### **People**

Another interest area regarding crash data are the various populations involved. NHTSA publishes fact sheets on crash data specific to pedestrians, bicyclists and other cyclists, children, young driver, and older population.

#### *Pedestrians*

In 2020 there were 6,516 pedestrians killed in traffic crashes, a 3.9-percent increase from the 6,272 pedestrian fatalities in 2019. There were also an estimated 54,769 pedestrians injured, a 28-percent decrease from 75,650 pedestrians injured in 2019. Pedestrian deaths accounted for 17 percent of all traffic fatalities and 2 percent of all people injured in traffic crashes in 2020.

On average, a pedestrian was killed every 81 minutes and injured every 10 minutes in traffic crashes in 2020.

In 2020 seventy-one percent of the pedestrians killed in traffic crashes were males.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Pedestrians Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813310.pdf>.

## *Bicyclists and Other Cyclists*

In 2020 there were 938 pedalcyclist fatalities, which accounted for 2.4 percent of all traffic fatalities during the year. There was a 9-percent increase in pedalcyclists killed (938) from the 859 pedalcyclists killed in 2019.

Seventy-nine percent of fatal pedalcyclists crashes in 2020 were in urban areas.

Twenty-two percent of the pedalcyclists who died in 2020 had BACs of .01 g/dL or greater.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Bicyclists and Other Cyclists Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813322.pdf>.

## *Children*

Of the 38,824 traffic fatalities in 2020 in the United States, 1,093 (3%) were children 14 and younger. Child traffic fatalities increased by 3 percent from 2019 (1,064). An estimated 139,042 children were injured in traffic crashes in 2020, a 24-percent decrease from 183,166 in 2019.

On average, 3 children were killed and an estimated 380 children were injured every day in traffic crashes in 2020.

In 2020, based on known restraint use, 65 percent of the children riding with unrestrained passenger vehicle drivers were also unrestrained.

Of the 1,093 children killed in traffic crashes, 229 (21%) were killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes in 2020.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Children Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813285.pdf>.

## *Young Drivers*

In 2020 there were 1,885 young drivers (15 to 20 years old) who died in traffic crashes, a 17-percent increase from 1,616 in 2019. There were an estimated 189,950 young drivers injured in traffic crashes, a decrease of 7 percent from 204,862 in 2019.

Young drivers accounted for 8.5 percent of all drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2020. However, young drivers were only 5.1 percent of all licensed drivers in 2020.

The rate of drivers involved in fatal crashes per 100,000 licensed drivers for young female drivers was 21.54 in 2020. For young male drivers the involvement rate was 56.59, more than twice that of young female drivers.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Young Driver Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813313.pdf>.

## *Older Population*

In 2020 there were 6,549 people 65 and older killed and an estimated 233,235 injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Older people made up 17 percent of all traffic fatalities and 10 percent of all people injured during the year. Compared to 2019 there was a 10-percent decrease in the number of fatalities and a 19-percent decrease in the number of those injured in the older age group.

In 2020 there were 55.7 million people—17 percent of the total U.S. population—who were 65 and older. The older population fatality rates per 100,000 population dropped to almost even with those under 65.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Older Population Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813341.pdf>.

## *Vehicles*

In addition to different populations of traffic fatalities, information regarding vehicles used at the time of travel is of importance in research, program development, and rulemaking. Traffic crashes related to passenger vehicles, large trucks, motorcycles, and vehicles used for school transportation are each discussed in separate NHTSA fact sheets.

## Passenger Vehicles

Passenger vehicles are defined as motor vehicles with gross vehicle weight ratings (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or less and include passenger cars and light trucks (SUVs, pickups, vans, and other light trucks).

Passenger vehicles made up 92 percent of registered vehicles and accounted for 88 percent of total VMT in 2020. There were 54,272 vehicles involved in fatal crashes of which 76 percent (41,434) were passenger vehicles.

In 2020 there were 23,824 passenger vehicle occupants who died in motor vehicle traffic crashes, a 6.5-percent increase from 22,372 in 2019. An estimated 2,034,844 passenger vehicle occupants were injured, a 17-percent decrease from 2,447,985 in 2019.

Among the passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2020 in traffic crashes, 57 percent were passenger car occupants and 43 percent were light-truck occupants.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Passenger Vehicles Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813323.pdf>.

## Large Trucks

A large truck as defined in this fact sheet is any medium or heavy truck, excluding buses and motor homes, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds. These large trucks include both commercial and non-commercial vehicles. In 2020 seventy-two percent of the large trucks involved in fatal crashes were heavy large trucks (GVWR > 26,000 lbs.).

In 2020 there were 4,965 people killed in crashes involving large trucks. This was a 1-percent decrease from 5,032 in 2019. Seventy-one percent of people killed in large-truck crashes in 2020 were occupants of other vehicles.

In 2020 there were an estimated 146,930 people injured in crashes involving large trucks—a decrease of 8 percent from an estimated 159,359 in 2019. Sixty-eight percent of people injured in large-truck crashes in 2020 were occupants of other vehicles.

Three percent of drivers of large trucks involved in fatal crashes in 2020 had BACs of .08 g/dL or higher, much lower than drivers of other vehicle types (27% for motorcycles, 23% for passenger cars, and 19% for light trucks).

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Large Trucks Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813286.pdf>.

## Motorcycles

Motorcycles include two- and three-wheeled motorcycles, off-road motorcycles, mopeds, scooters, mini bikes, and pocket bikes. The motorcycle rider is the person operating the motorcycle; the passenger is a person seated on, but not operating the motorcycle; the motorcyclist is a general term referring to either the rider or passenger.

In 2020 there were 5,579 motorcyclists killed, 14 percent of all traffic fatalities. This is the highest number of motorcyclists killed since FARS started in 1975. The number of motorcyclist fatalities increased by 11 percent from 2019, from 5,044 to 5,579. An estimated 82,528 motorcyclists were injured in 2020, a 2-percent decrease from 83,814 motorcyclists injured in 2019.

Per VMT in 2020, motorcyclist fatalities occurred nearly 28 times more frequently than passenger car occupant fatalities in traffic crashes.

Forty-one percent of motorcycle riders who died in single-vehicle crashes in 2020 were alcohol-impaired. Motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes in 2020 had higher percentages of alcohol impairment than drivers of any other motor vehicle type (27% for motorcycles, 23% for passenger cars, 19% for light trucks, and 3% for large trucks).

In States without universal helmet laws, 57 percent of motorcyclists killed in 2020 were not wearing helmets, as compared to 11 percent in States with universal helmet laws.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Motorcycles Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813306.pdf>.

## School Transportation

From 2011 to 2020 there were 1,009 fatal school-transportation-related crashes, and 1,125 people of all ages were killed in those crashes—an average of 113 fatalities per year.

There were 113 occupants killed in school transportation vehicles from 2011 to 2020; 53 were drivers, and 60 were passengers. Most (70%) of the people killed in school-transportation-related crashes were occupants of other vehicles involved in the crashes.

More school-age pedestrians were killed from 3 p.m. to 3:59 p.m. and 7 a.m. to 7:59 a.m. than any other hours of the day from 2011 to 2020.



For more detailed information, view the 2020 School-Transportation-Related Crashes Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813327.pdf>.

## Crash Location

Data relating to crash location in this report pertain to whether a crash was in a rural location or an urban location, as defined by the Federal Highway Administration.

### Rural/Urban Comparison

Of the 38,824 motor vehicle traffic fatalities in 2020, there were 16,665 (43%) that occurred in rural areas, 21,650 (56%) in urban areas, and 509 (1%) in areas of unknown land use.

Fatalities in rural areas increased by 2 percent from 16,288 in 2019 to 16,665 in 2020, and in urban areas increased by 9 percent from 19,946 in 2019 to 21,650 in 2020.

According to the Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey (latest data available), an estimated 19 percent of the U.S. population lived in rural areas, and according to the Federal Highway Administration 31 percent of the total VMT in 2020 were in rural areas. However, rural areas accounted for 43 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2020.

For more detailed information, view the 2020 Rural/Urban Comparison of Traffic Fatalities Fact Sheet at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813336.pdf>.

## Economic Cost for All Traffic Crashes

The estimated economic cost of all traffic crashes in the United States in 2010 (the most recent year for which cost data is available) was \$242 billion. Included in the economic costs are:

- lost productivity,
- workplace losses,
- legal and court expenses,
- medical costs,
- emergency medical services,
- insurance administration costs,
- congestion costs, and
- property damage costs.

These costs represent the tangible losses that result from traffic crashes. However, in cases of serious injury or death, such costs fail to capture the rather intangible value of lost quality-of-life that results from these injuries. When quality of life valuations are considered, the total value of societal harm from traffic crashes in the United States in 2010 was an estimated \$836 billion.

The costs related to specific types of crashes have also been estimated. Table 3 presents the economic and comprehensive costs of crash topics discussed in this fact sheet.

Table 3  
**Economic and Comprehensive Cost Estimates for All Traffic Crashes, 2010**

Type of Crashes	Economic Cost (billions)	Comprehensive Cost (billions)
Speeding	\$52.0	\$203.2
Alcohol-Impaired	\$44.0	\$201.1
Motorcycle	\$12.9	\$65.7
Pedestrian	\$11.5	\$65.0
Unrestrained	\$10.4	\$68.6
Bicyclist and Other Cyclist	\$4.4	\$21.7
Unhelmeted	\$1.2	\$7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$242.0</b>	<b>\$835.8</b>

Source: Blincoe, L. J., Miller, T. R., Zaloshnja, E., & Lawrence, B. A. (2015, May). *The economic and societal impact of motor vehicle crashes, 2010* (Revised) (Report No. DOT HS 812 013). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Available at [www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pubs/812013.pdf](http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pubs/812013.pdf).

Each fatality resulted in an average discounted lifetime economic cost of \$1.4 million, and an average comprehensive cost of \$9.1 million. For further information on cost estimates, see Blincoe et al.'s *The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2010* (Revised) at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812013.pdf>.

## Fatality Analysis Reporting System

FARS contains data on every fatal motor vehicle traffic crash within the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. To be included in FARS, a traffic crash must involve a motor vehicle traveling on a public trafficway that results in the death of a vehicle occupant or a nonoccupant within 30 days of the crash. The Annual Report File (ARF) is the FARS data file associated with the most recent available year, which is subject to change when it is finalized the following year to the final version known as the Final File. The additional time between the ARF and the Final File provides the opportunity for submission of important variable data requiring outside sources, which may lead to changes in the final counts. More information on FARS can be found at [www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/fatality-analysis-reporting-system](http://www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/fatality-analysis-reporting-system).

The updated final counts for the previous data year will be reflected with the release of the recent year's ARF. For example, along with the release of the 2020 ARF, the 2019 Final File was released to replace the 2019 ARF. The final fatality count in motor vehicle traffic crashes for 2019 was 36,355, which was updated from 36,096 in the 2019 ARF.

The 2017 and 2018 Final Files have been amended, but this amendment did not change the overall number of fatal crashes or fatalities.

## Crash Report Sampling System

NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA) redesigned the nationally representative sample of police-reported traffic crashes, which estimates the number of police-reported injury and property-damage-only crashes in the United States. The new system, called CRSS, replaced the National Automotive Sampling System (NASS) General Estimates System (GES) in 2016. More information on CRSS can be found at [www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/crash-report-sampling-system-crss](http://www.nhtsa.gov/crash-data-systems/crash-report-sampling-system-crss).

In calendar year 2020, NCSA changed the methodology of estimating people nonfatally injured in motor vehicle traf-

fic crashes. The new approach combines people nonfatally injured from both FARS and NASS GES/CRSS. This is done by extracting people nonfatally injured in fatal crashes from FARS with people nonfatally injured in police-reported injury crashes from NASS GES/CRSS. The old approach extracted people nonfatally injured from only NASS GES/CRSS, regardless of crash severity. This change in methodology caused some estimates of people injured to change for prior years.

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## For More Information:

Motor vehicle traffic crash data are available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA), NSA-230. NCSA can be contacted at [NCSARequests@dot.gov](mailto:NCSARequests@dot.gov) or 800-934-8517. NCSA programs can be found at [www.nhtsa.gov/data](http://www.nhtsa.gov/data). To report a motor vehicle safety-related problem or to inquire about safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236 or [www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/VehicleComplaint/](http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/VehicleComplaint/).

The following data tools and resources can be found at <https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/>.

- Fatal Motor Vehicle Crash Data Visualizations
- Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST)
- State Traffic Safety Information (STSI)
- Traffic Safety Facts Annual Report Tables
- FARS Data Tables (FARS Encyclopedia)
- Crash Viewer
- Product Information Catalog and Vehicle Listing (vPIC)
- FARS, NASS GES, CRSS, NASS Crashworthiness Data System (CDS), and Crash Investigation Sampling System (CISS) data can be downloaded for further analysis.

Other fact sheets available from NCSA:

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|---|--|
| ■ Alcohol-Impaired Driving                  | ■ Pedestrians                                  |
| ■ Bicyclists and Other Cyclists             | ■ Rural/Urban Comparison of Traffic Fatalities |
| ■ Children                                  | ■ School-Transportation-Related Crashes        |
| ■ Large Trucks                              | ■ Speeding                                     |
| ■ Motorcycles                               | ■ State Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Estimates     |
| ■ Occupant Protection in Passenger Vehicles | ■ State Traffic Data                           |
| ■ Older Population                          | ■ Young Drivers                                |
| ■ Passenger Vehicles                        |  |

Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data*. The fact sheets and Traffic Safety Facts annual report can be found at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/>.



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