

# Traffic Safety Facts 1996

U.S. Department of Transportation  
National Highway Traffic  
Safety Administration

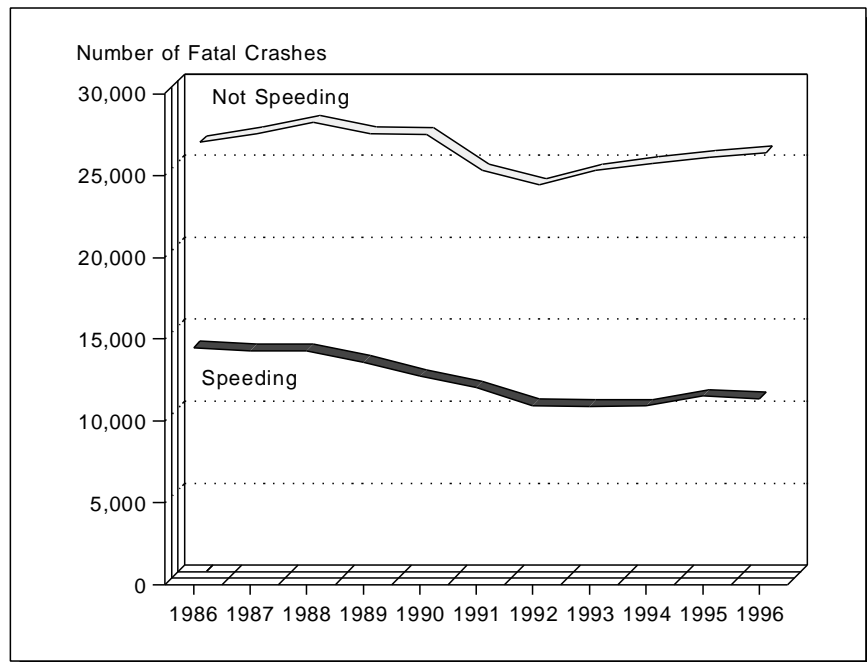


## Speeding



Speeding — exceeding the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions — is one of the most prevalent factors contributing to traffic crashes. The human and economic sacrifice is unacceptable. The economic cost to society of speeding-related crashes is estimated by NHTSA to be \$28.8 billion per year. In 1996, speeding was a contributing factor in 30 percent of all fatal crashes, and 12,998 lives were lost in speeding-related crashes.

Figure 1. Fatal Crashes by Speeding Status, 1986-1996



*“The economic cost of speeding-related crashes is estimated to be \$28.8 billion each year.”*

Motor vehicle crashes cost society an estimated \$4,800 per second. The total economic cost of crashes was estimated at \$150.5 billion in 1994. The 1996 costs of **speeding-related** crashes were estimated to be \$28.8 billion — \$54,804 per minute or \$913 per second.

Table 1. Estimated Annual Economic Costs of Speeding-Related Crashes (1994 Dollars per Year)

Crash Type	Cost
Fatal	\$10.8 billion
Injury (Non-Fatal)	\$14.0 billion
Property-Damage-Only	\$4.3 billion
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$28.8 billion</b>

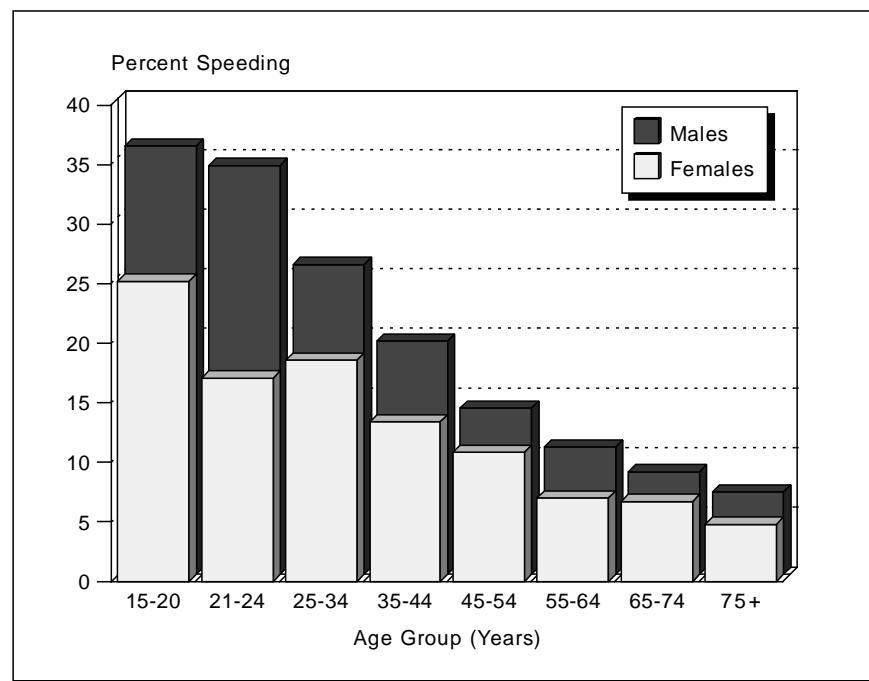


In 1996, 624,000 people received minor injuries in speeding-related crashes. An additional 75,000 people received moderate injuries, and 41,000 received critical injuries in speeding-related crashes.

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.

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 1996, 36 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, 1996**



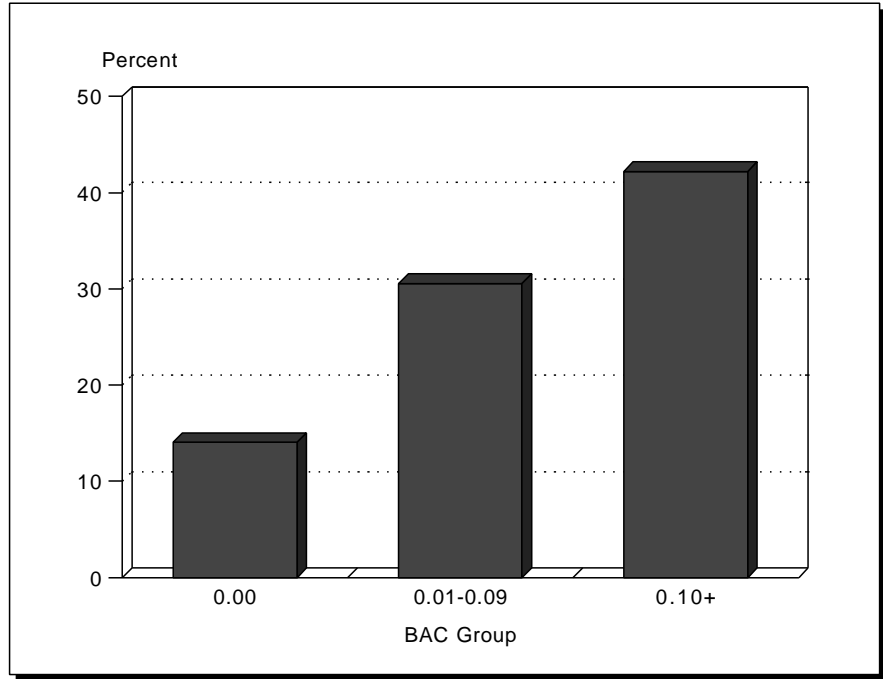
***“In 1996, 36 percent of male drivers 15 to 20 years old involved in fatal crashes were speeding.”***

Alcohol and speeding seem to go hand in hand. In 1996, 22 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 0.10 (grams per deciliter [g/dl]) or greater. In contrast, only 9 percent of the **nonspeeding** drivers under age 21 involved in fatal crashes in 1996 were intoxicated.

For drivers between 21 and 24 years of age who were involved in fatal crashes in 1996, 47 percent of **speeding** drivers were intoxicated, compared with only 19 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers.

Alcohol and speeding are clearly a deadly combination. Alcohol involvement is prevalent for drivers involved in speeding-related crashes. In 1996, 42 percent of the **intoxicated** drivers (BAC = 0.10 or higher) involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared with only 14 percent of the **sober** drivers (BAC = 0.00) involved in fatal crashes (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percentage of All Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes That Were Speeding, by BAC Level, 1996



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

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.

Figure 4. Drivers in Fatal Crashes by Alcohol Involvement, Speeding Status, and Time of Day, 1996

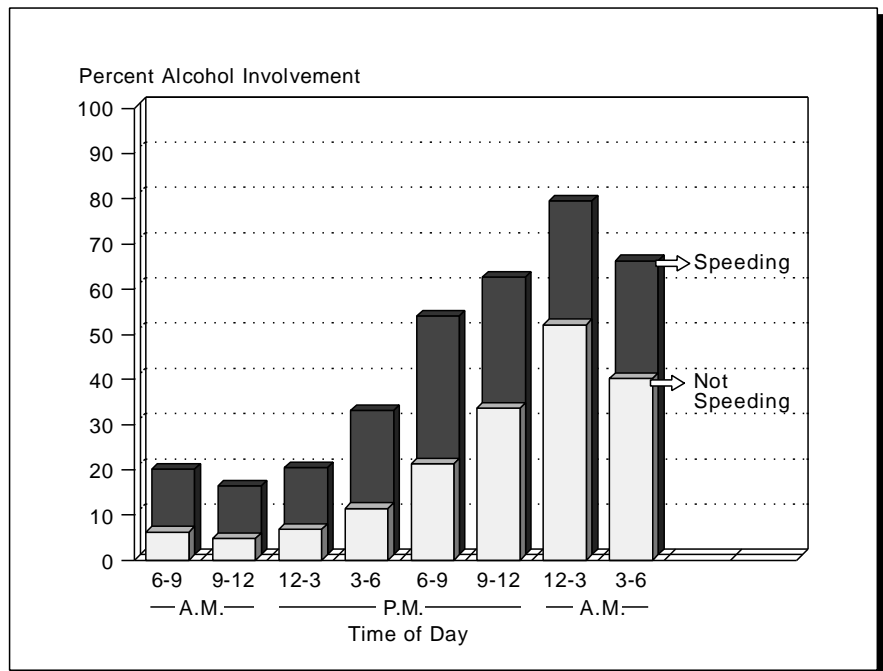
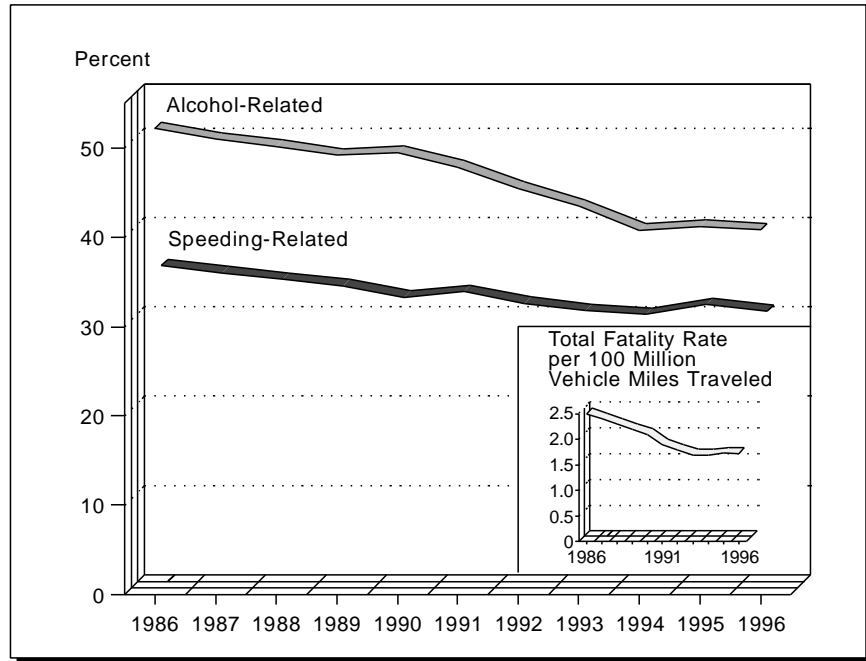


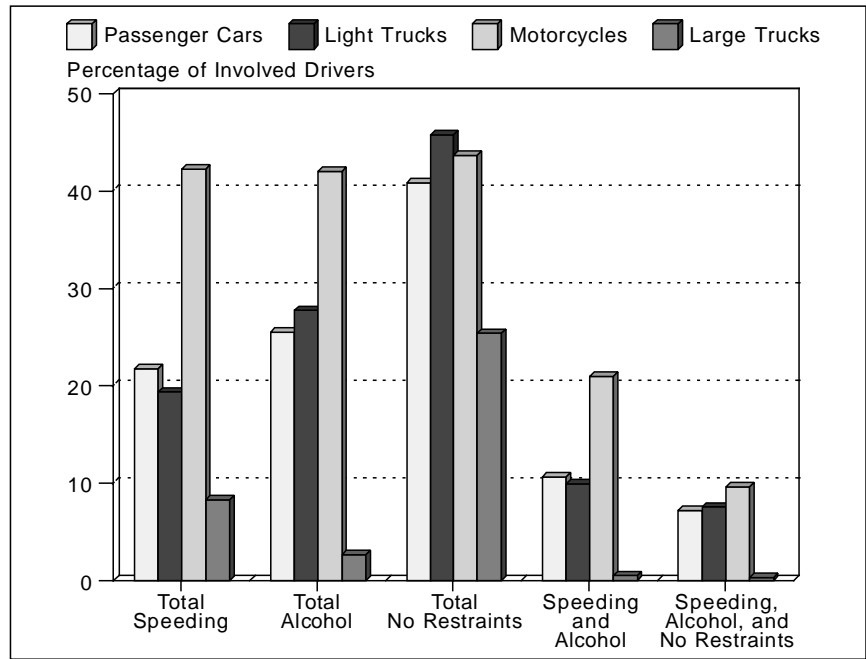
Figure 5. Percentages of Fatalities Related to Speeding and to Alcohol, 1986-1996



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

In 1996, 42 percent of all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were speeding. The percentage of speeding involvement in fatal crashes was nearly twice as high for motorcyclists as for drivers of passenger cars or light trucks, and the percentage of alcohol involvement was 50 percent higher for motorcyclists.

Figure 6. Speeding, Alcohol Involvement, and Failure To Use Restraints Among Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Vehicle Type, 1996



**“Among drivers in fatal crashes in 1996, those who were not speeding were twice as likely to be wearing safety belts as those who were speeding at the time of the crash.”**

In 1996, only 37 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, 58 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 35 percent, but 64 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers in fatal crashes were restrained.

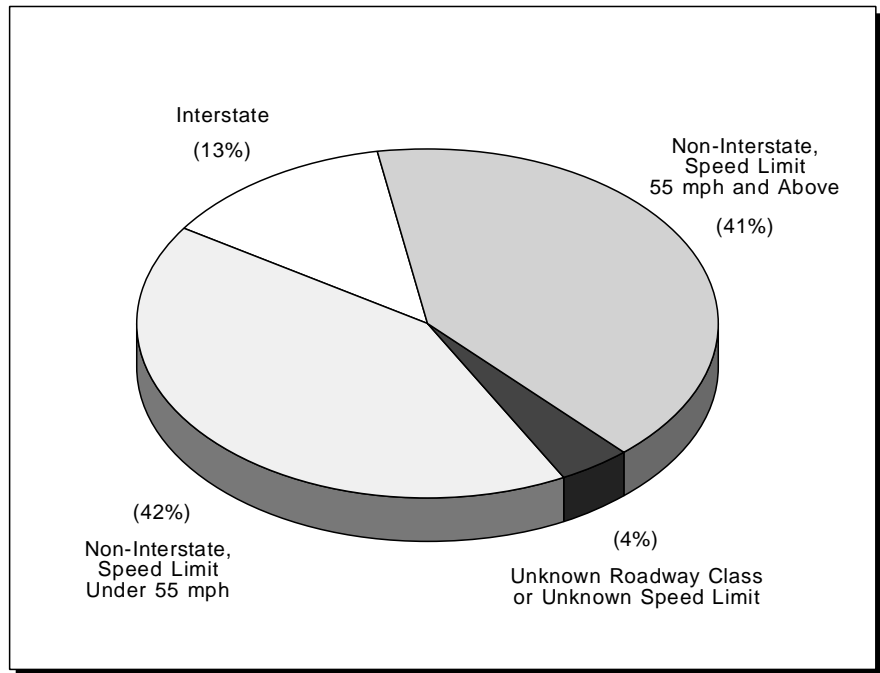
In 1996, 20 percent of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes had an invalid license at the time of the crash, compared with 9 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers.

Speeding was a factor in 29 percent of the fatal crashes that occurred on dry roads in 1996 and in 32 percent of those that occurred on wet roads. Speeding was a factor in 47 percent of the fatal crashes that occurred when there was snow or slush on the road and in 54 percent of those that occurred on icy roads.

Speeding was involved in more than one-third of the fatal crashes that occurred in construction/maintenance zones in 1996.

In 1996, 87 percent of speeding-related fatalities occurred on roads that were not Interstate highways.

**Figure 7. Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type, 1996**



**“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, NRD-31, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590. Telephone inquiries should be addressed to Ms. Louann Hall 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 Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

Table 2. Speeding-Related Traffic Fatalities and Costs by Road Type and Speed Limit, 1996

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit									Estimated Costs of Speeding-Related Crashes by Road Type (Million 1994 Dollars)		
		Total	Interstate		Non-Interstate						Total	Interstate	Non-Interstate
			>55 mph	≤55 mph	55 mph	50 mph	45 mph	40 mph	35 mph	<35 mph			
AL	1,143	432	37	11	157	16	109	29	39	26	483	58	425
AK	80	29	1	5	6	0	4	1	2	4	64	11	53
AZ	993	286	29	19	46	15	49	35	37	38	501	75	426
AR	615	227	11	9	126	0	21	11	15	17	300	35	265
CA	3,989	1,435	230	15	385	55	126	113	179	142	3,108	462	2,646
CO	617	266	39	8	98	15	27	23	25	30	433	67	366
CT	310	87	0	8	8	0	10	7	17	37	377	47	330
DE	116	24	0	1	4	11	0	3	2	3	66	7	59
DC	62	30	0	1	0	2	4	0	2	21	102	10	92
FL	2,753	722	51	36	128	29	119	66	84	92	1,638	221	1,416
GA	1,574	367	28	18	168	7	46	13	47	36	791	104	687
HI	148	52	0	3	5	1	6	0	18	19	130	14	116
ID	258	101	15	1	29	14	7	0	14	10	124	18	106
IL	1,477	484	33	48	215	5	18	30	7	128	1,229	179	1,048
IN	984	207	12	11	58	8	17	19	21	32	506	67	439
IA	465	64	9	0	24	5	7	0	10	8	212	29	183
KS	491	128	7	3	52	4	4	8	9	17	241	27	214
KY	841	253	13	6	165	0	19	0	38	8	416	46	370
LA	781	160	9	8	73	7	21	7	18	15	452	58	394
ME	169	76	2	1	11	16	27	3	9	6	140	14	126
MD	608	93	3	8	10	11	6	17	10	23	525	70	455
MA	417	111	19	6	5	2	8	16	23	30	681	101	580
MI	1,505	369	28	19	178	8	35	12	34	45	997	134	864
MN	576	159	2	8	102	7	8	1	4	21	359	39	320
MS	811	140	20	7	49	19	16	11	8	9	217	34	183
MO	1,149	470	52	15	216	4	21	27	49	43	706	99	607
MT	200	85	5	1	22	0	3	0	4	3	100	20	80
NE	293	81	16	0	11	29	2	2	3	6	169	27	143
NV	348	113	19	0	9	4	29	0	17	14	216	32	184
NH	134	30	0	2	3	3	2	6	7	7	79	9	70
NJ	818	83	0	14	12	20	5	6	2	23	1,017	140	877
NM	481	180	30	2	44	15	15	4	24	15	240	37	203
NY	1,564	409	10	15	163	16	17	26	18	53	2,242	277	1,965
NC	1,493	531	22	15	334	2	79	1	70	6	969	106	864
ND	85	45	1	0	35	1	1	0	1	3	55	4	51
OH	1,395	357	23	6	203	3	23	12	44	38	1,242	153	1,089
OK	772	347	47	8	66	15	46	21	14	12	425	63	362
OR	524	144	11	2	90	0	8	12	14	6	274	32	242
PA	1,469	533	28	20	160	12	114	66	87	41	1,108	130	979
RI	69	25	0	4	1	5	1	0	2	12	84	12	72
SC	930	434	40	14	177	12	89	19	45	38	511	66	445
SD	175	46	5	2	20	1	8	1	1	1	71	10	61
TN	1,239	332	23	14	124	10	56	38	26	41	571	71	500
TX	3,741	1,464	163	61	274	48	114	101	115	122	2,468	361	2,107
UT	321	88	28	2	17	7	3	14	4	10	163	33	130
VT	88	48	5	1	1	22	1	7	8	3	60	8	52
VA	875	236	22	10	129	1	35	4	17	15	598	81	517
WA	712	249	22	3	51	49	15	14	45	38	634	78	556
WV	345	98	12	1	51	2	7	3	15	7	182	24	157
WI	761	208	13	4	119	2	16	4	10	26	461	54	407
WY	143	60	15	0	5	3	5	2	2	11	71	15	56
<b>USA*</b>	<b>41,907</b>	<b>12,998</b>	<b>1,210</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>4,439</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>1,429</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>1,316</b>	<b>1,411</b>	<b>28,805</b>	<b>3,868</b>	<b>24,937</b>
PR	601	297	0	88	12	10	61	25	60	41	659	195	464

\*Of the total number of speeding-related fatalities in 1996, 5,636 occurred on roads with posted speed limits between 55 and 65 mph, and 547 occurred on roads with speed limits above 65 mph.

Notes: Totals may not equal sum of components due to independent rounding. The total column for speeding-related fatalities includes fatalities that occurred on roads for which the speed limit was unknown. The total column for costs of speeding-related crashes includes costs for crashes that occurred on unknown road types. Costs are based on preliminary estimates.