Traffic Safety Facts 1995

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



Pedalcyclists



"The 830 pedalcyclist deaths in 1995 accounted for 2 percent of all traffic fatalities during the year."

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).

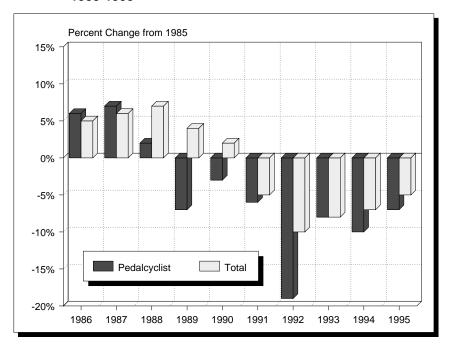
Nearly 44,000 pedalcyclists have died in traffic crashes in the United States since 1932—the first year in which estimates of pedalcyclist fatalities were recorded. The 350 pedalcyclists killed in 1932 accounted for 1.3 percent of the 27,979 persons who died in traffic crashes that year.

In 1995, 61,000 pedalcyclists were injured and 830 were killed in traffic crashes. Pedalcyclists made up 2 percent of all the people injured in traffic crashes, and pedalcyclist deaths accounted for 2 percent of all traffic fatalities during the year.

The number of pedalcyclist fatalities in 1995 was 7 percent lower than the 890 fatalities reported in 1985. The highest number of pedalcyclist fatalities ever recorded in the Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) was 1,003 in 1975.

In 1985, the average age of pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes was 23.3 years; in 1995 the average age of those killed was 29.6 years, and the average age of those injured was 22.1 years.

Figure 1. Trends in Pedalcyclist and Total Traffic Fatalities, 1985-1995



Pedalcyclists accounted for 13 percent of all nonmotorist traffic fatalities in 1995. Pedestrians accounted for 86 percent, and the remaining 2 percent were skateboard riders, roller skaters, etc.

Year Pedestrian **Pedalcyclist** Other Total 1985 6.808 890 84 7.782 1986 6,779 941 133 7,853 1987 6,745 948 132 7,825 1988 6,870 911 136 7,917 6,556 1989 832 107 7,495 1990 859 6,482 124 7,465 1991 5,801 843 124 6,768 1992 5.549 723 98 6.370 1993 5,649 816 111 6,576 1994 5,489 802 107 6,398 1995 5,585 830 109 6,524

Table 1. Nonoccupant Traffic Fatalities, 1985-1995

"Nearly one-third of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 1995 were between 5 and 15 years old." Pedalcyclist fatalities occurred more frequently in urban areas (66 percent), at nonintersection locations (68 percent), between the hours of 4:00 PM and 8:00 PM (33 percent), and during the months of June, July, and August (37 percent).

Most of the pedalcyclists injured or killed in 1995 were males (80 percent and 85 percent, respectively), and most were between the ages of 5 and 44 years (91 percent and 77 percent).

The pedalcyclist injury rate per capita was more than 4 times as high for males as for females, and the fatality rate per capita was nearly 6 times as high for males as for females.

Pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for 47 percent of all pedalcyclists injured and 34 percent of those killed in traffic crashes in 1995. In comparison, pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for 49 percent of all those killed in 1985.

Pedalcyclists 25 years of age and older have made up an increasing proportion of all pedalcyclist deaths since 1985. The proportion of pedalcyclist fatalities age 25 to 64 was nearly twice as high in 1995 as in 1985 (46 percent and 25 percent, respectively).

Almost one-third (32 percent) of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 1995 were between 5 and 15 years old. The pedalcyclist fatality rate for this age group was 6.3 per million population—twice the rate for all pedalcyclists (3.2 per million population). The injury rate for this age group was 664 per million population, compared with 233 per million population for pedalcyclists of all ages.

For 72 percent of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 1995, police reported one or more errors or other factors related to the cyclist's behavior. The factor most often noted was "failure to yield right-of-way" (24 percent), followed by "walking with or against traffic, playing, working, sitting, lying, standing, etc., in roadway" (17 percent), and "improper crossing of the roadway or intersection" (14 percent). Fewer than half of the drivers involved were cited by police for driving errors or other factors related to driver behavior. The factors most often noted for drivers were "driving too fast for conditions or exceeding the speed limit" (12 percent), "inattentive (talking, eating, etc.)" (8 percent), and "failure to keep in proper lane or running off road" (8 percent).

"Alcohol involvement was reported in more than one-third of the pedalcyclist fatalities in 1995."

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 1995. In 29 percent of the crashes, either the driver or the cyclist was intoxicated, with blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) of 0.10 grams per deciliter (g/dl) or greater. Lower alcohol levels (BAC 0.01 to 0.09 g/dl) were reported in an additional 8 percent. Nearly one-fourth (24.7 percent) of the pedalcyclists killed had a BAC of 0.01 g/dl or greater, and nearly one-fifth (19.6 percent) were intoxicated.

Table 2. Pedalcyclist Fatalities and Injuries and Fatality and Injury Rates by Age and Sex, 1995

		Male		Female			Total		
Age (years)	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*
0-4	12	10,025	1.20	2	9,566	0.21	14	19,591	0.71
5-9	76	9,843	7.72	25	9,377	2.67	101	19,220	5.25
10-15	136	11,629	11.70	29	11,076	2.62	165	22,704	7.27
16-20	52	9,142	5.69	7	8,696	0.80	59	17,839	3.31
21-24	37	7,266	5.09	7	7,052	0.99	44	14,318	3.07
25-34	113	20,432	5.53	15	20,441	0.73	128	40,873	3.13
35-44	123	21,062	5.84	19	21,406	0.89	142	42,468	3.34
45-54	58	15,182	3.82	11	15,897	0.69	69	31,079	2.22
55-64	42	10,044	4.18	2	11,087	0.18	44	21,131	2.08
65-69	12	4,506	2.66	2	5,422	0.37	14	9,928	1.41
70-79	21	6,557	3.20	4	8,956	0.45	25	15,512	1.61
80+	13	2,626	4.95	2	5,466	0.37	15	8,092	1.85
Unknown	8			1			** 10		
Total	703	128,314	5.48	126	134,441	0.94	830	262,755	3.16
		Male		Female			Total		
Age		Population	Injury		Population	Injury		Population	Injury
(years)	Injuries	(thousands)	Rate*	Injuries	(thousands)	Rate*	Injuries	(thousands)	Rate*
0-4	***	10,025	25	1,000	9,566	68	1,000	19,591	46
5-9	5,000	9,843	477	2,000	9,377	221	7,000	19,220	352
10-15	17,000	11,629	1,472	4,000	11,076	356	21,000	22,704	927
16-20	6,000	9,142	650	2,000	8,696	182	8,000	17,839	422
21-24	4,000	7,266	616	1,000	7,052	159	6,000	14,318	391
25-34	6,000	20,432	292	1,000	20,441	65	7,000	40,873	178
35-44	6,000	21,062	291	1,000	21,406	44	7,000	42,468	167
45-54	2,000	15,182	162	***	15,897	22	3,000	31,079	91
55-64	1,000	10,044	56	***	11,087	4	1,000	21,131	29
65-69	***	4,506	45	***	5,422	9	***	9,928	25
70-79	1,000	6,557	155	***	8,956	0	1,000	15,512	65
80+	***	2,626	37	***	5,466	14	***	8,092	21
Total	49,000	128,314	381	12,000	134,441	91	61,000	262,755	233

^{*} Rate per million population.

Source: Population—Bureau of the Census projections.

For more information:

Information on pedalcyclist 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 (202) 366-4198. 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/ncsa. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

^{**} Includes one fatality of unknown sex.

^{***} Less than 500 injuries.

Table 3. Pedalcyclist Traffic Fatalities and Fatality Rates by State, 1995

Total State						
Alaska	State	Traffic	Population		of	Fatalities per Million
Alaska	Alabama	1.113	4.253	6	0.5	1.41
Arizona						
Arkansas 631 2,484 5 0.8 2.01 California 4,192 31,589 136 3.2 4.31 Colorado 645 3,747 10 1.6 2.67 Connecticut 317 3,275 7 2.2 2.14 Delaware 121 717 1 0.8 1.39 District of Columbia 58 554 1 1.7 1.80 Florida 2,805 14,166 148 5.3 10.45 Georgia 1,488 7,201 19 1.3 2.64 Hawaii 130 1,187 5 3.8 4.21 Idaho 262 1,163 2 0.8 1.72 Illinois 1,586 11,830 27 1.7 2.28 Indiana 960 5,803 14 1.5 2.41 Iowa 527 2,642 7 1.3 2.46 Kansas 442						
California 4.192 31,889 136 3.2 4.31 Colorado 645 3,747 10 1.6 2.67 Connecticut 317 3,275 7 2.2 2.14 Delaware 121 717 1 0.8 1.39 District of Columbia 58 554 1 1.7 1.80 Florida 2,805 14,166 148 5.3 10.45 Georgia 1,488 7,201 19 1.3 2.64 Hawaii 130 1,187 5 3.8 4.21 Idaho 262 1,163 2 0.8 1.72 Illinois 1,586 11,830 27 1.7 2.28 Indiana 960 5,803 14 1.5 2.41 Ilowa 527 2,842 7 1.3 2.46 Kentucky 8.49 2,860 4 0.5 1.04 Louisiana 883						
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Idaho	Georgia	1,488		19		
Illinois 1,586 11,830 27 1,7 2,28 Indiana 960 5,803 14 1,5 2,41 Indiana 960 5,803 14 1,5 2,41 Indiana 527 2,842 7 1,3 2,46 Kansas 442 2,565 6 1,4 2,34 Kentucky 849 3,860 4 0,5 1,04 Louisiana 883 4,342 27 3,1 6,22 Maine 187 1,241 1 0,5 0,81 Maryland 671 5,042 8 1,2 1,59 Massachusetts 444 6,074 8 1,8 1,32 Michigan 1,530 9,549 30 2,0 3,14 Minnesota 597 4,610 5 0,8 1,08 Mississippi 868 2,697 6 0,7 2,22 Missouri 1,109 5,324 10 0,9 1,88 Montana 215 870 1 0,5 1,15 Nebraska 254 1,637 4 1,6 2,44 Nevada 313 1,530 3 1,0 1,96 New Hampshire 118 1,148 0 0,0 0,00 New Jersey 773 7,945 19 2,5 2,39 New Mexico 485 1,685 6 1,2 3,56 New York 1,674 18,136 50 3,0 2,76 North Carolina 1,448 7,195 35 2,4 4,86 North Dakota 74 641 1 1,4 1,56 North Dakota 75 3,141 9 1,6 2,87 Pennsylvania 881 3,673 11 1,2 2,99 North Dakota 1,88 3,673 11 1,2 2,99 North Carolina 881 3,673 11 1,2 2,99 North Carolina 1,448 7,195 3,278 3 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0 0,0	Hawaii		1,187			4.21
Indiana	Idaho	262	1,163	2	0.8	1.72
Dowa	Illinois	1,586	11,830	27	1.7	2.28
Dowa	Indiana			14	1.5	
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Wyoming 170 480 1 0.6 2.08 U.S. Total 41,798 262,755 830 2.0 3.16				17		
U.S. Total 41,798 262,755 830 2.0 3.16				1		
Puerto Rico 595 3,755 12 2.0 3.20				830		
	Puerto Rico	595	3,755	12	2.0	3.20

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

Sources: Fatalities—Fatal Accident Reporting System, NHTSA. Population—Bureau of the Census.