

Traffic Safety Facts 1996

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



Pedalcyclists



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 1996, 761 pedalcyclists were killed and an additional 59,000 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 1996 was 19 percent lower than the 941 fatalities reported in 1986. The highest number of pedalcyclist fatalities ever recorded in the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) was 1,003 in 1975.

In 1986, the average age of pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes was 23.0 years; in 1996 the average age of those killed was 31.0 years, and the average age of those injured was 23.2 years.

Pedalcyclists accounted for 12 percent of all nonmotorist traffic fatalities in 1996. Pedestrians accounted for 86 percent, and the remaining 2 percent were skateboard riders, roller skaters, etc.

“The 761 pedalcyclist deaths in 1996 accounted for 2 percent of all traffic fatalities during the year.”

Figure 1. Trends in Pedalcyclist and Total Traffic Fatalities, 1986-1996

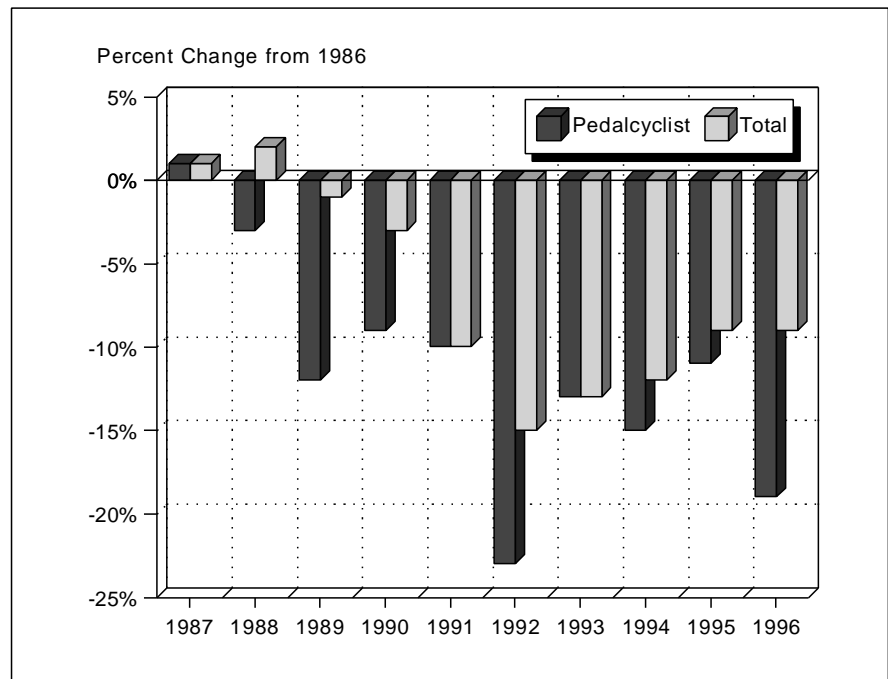


Table 1. Nonoccupant Traffic Fatalities, 1986-1996

Year	Pedestrian	Pedalcyclist	Other	Total
1986	6,779	941	133	7,853
1987	6,745	948	132	7,825
1988	6,870	911	136	7,917
1989	6,556	832	107	7,495
1990	6,482	859	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	5,584	833	109	6,526
1996	5,412	761	153	6,326

Pedalcyclist fatalities occurred more frequently in urban areas (65 percent), at nonintersection locations (68 percent), between the hours of 4:00 PM and 8:00 PM (35 percent), and during the months of June, July, and August (38 percent).

Most of the pedalcyclists killed or injured in 1996 were males (86 percent and 80 percent, respectively), and most were between the ages of 5 and 44 years (73 percent and 88 percent, respectively).

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

Pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for 33 percent of all pedalcyclists killed and 45 percent of those injured in traffic crashes in 1996. In comparison, pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for 47 percent of all those killed in 1986.

Pedalcyclists 25 years of age and older have made up an increasing proportion of all pedalcyclist deaths since 1986. The proportion of pedalcyclist fatalities age 25 to 64 was nearly twice as high in 1996 as in 1986 (46 percent and 25 percent, respectively).

Almost one-third (31 percent) of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 1996 were between 5 and 15 years old. The pedalcyclist fatality rate for this age group was 5.6 per million population — nearly double the rate for all pedalcyclists (2.9 per million population). The injury rate for this age group was 621 per million population, compared with 221 per million population for pedalcyclists of all ages.

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 1996. In 28.0 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 8.3 percent. Nearly one-fourth (23.9 percent) of the pedalcyclists killed had a BAC of 0.01 g/dl or greater, and nearly one-fifth (17.9 percent) were intoxicated.

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“Alcohol involvement was reported in more than one-third of the pedalcyclist fatalities in 1996.”

Table 2. Pedalcyclist Fatalities and Injuries and Fatality and Injury Rates by Age and Sex, 1996

Age (years)	Male			Female			Total		
	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*
0-4	9	9,868	0.91	3	9,418	0.32	12	19,286	0.62
5-9	66	9,954	6.63	23	9,487	2.42	89	19,441	4.58
10-15	125	11,675	10.71	22	11,095	1.98	147	22,770	6.46
16-20	54	9,511	5.68	7	8,933	0.78	61	18,444	3.31
21-24	36	7,159	5.03	0	6,830	0.00	36	13,989	2.57
25-34	81	20,191	4.01	11	20,177	0.55	92	40,368	2.28
35-44	115	21,569	5.33	18	21,825	0.82	133	43,393	3.06
45-54	63	15,837	3.98	14	16,533	0.85	77	32,370	2.38
55-64	43	10,166	4.23	5	11,195	0.45	48	21,361	2.25
65-69	17	4,507	3.77	1	5,384	0.19	18	9,892	1.82
70-79	24	6,638	3.62	3	9,012	0.33	27	15,650	1.73
80+	14	2,736	5.12	1	5,583	0.18	15	8,319	1.80
Unknown	6	--	--	--	--	--	6	--	--
Total	653	129,810	5.03	108	135,474	0.80	761	265,284	2.87

Age (years)	Male			Female			Total		
	Injuries	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*	Injuries	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*	Injuries	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*
0-4	**	9,868	20	**	9,418	6	**	19,286	13
5-9	5,000	9,954	541	2,000	9,487	206	7,000	19,441	377
10-15	15,000	11,675	1,247	4,000	11,095	391	19,000	22,770	830
16-20	6,000	9,511	585	1,000	8,933	112	7,000	18,444	356
21-24	4,000	7,159	572	1,000	6,830	134	5,000	13,989	358
25-34	7,000	20,191	330	2,000	20,177	111	9,000	40,368	220
35-44	4,000	21,569	203	1,000	21,825	26	5,000	43,393	114
45-54	2,000	15,837	149	1,000	16,533	32	3,000	32,370	90
55-64	2,000	10,166	200	**	11,195	5	2,000	21,361	98
65-69	1,000	4,507	126	**	5,384	14	1,000	9,892	65
70-79	1,000	6,638	124	**	9,012	0	1,000	15,650	53
80+	**	2,736	57	**	5,583	7	**	8,319	24
Total	47,000	129,810	360	12,000	135,474	87	59,000	265,284	221

* Rate per million population.

** Less than 500 injuries.

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 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/nrsa>. 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 3. Pedalcyclist Traffic Fatalities and Fatality Rates by State, 1996

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Resident Population (thousands)	Pedalcyclist Fatalities	Percent of Total	Pedalcyclist Fatalities per Million Population
Alabama	1,143	4,273	6	0.5	1.40
Alaska	80	607	4	5.0	6.59
Arizona	993	4,428	29	2.9	6.55
Arkansas	615	2,509	5	0.8	1.99
California	3,989	31,878	123	3.1	3.86
Colorado	617	3,822	9	1.5	2.35
Connecticut	310	3,274	4	1.3	1.22
Delaware	116	724	3	2.6	4.14
District of Columbia	62	543	1	1.6	1.84
Florida	2,753	14,399	108	3.9	7.50
Georgia	1,574	7,353	15	1.0	2.04
Hawaii	148	1,183	5	3.4	4.23
Idaho	258	1,189	3	1.2	2.52
Illinois	1,477	11,846	28	1.9	2.36
Indiana	984	5,840	6	0.6	1.03
Iowa	465	2,851	11	2.4	3.86
Kansas	491	2,572	2	0.4	0.78
Kentucky	841	3,883	7	0.8	1.80
Louisiana	781	4,350	16	2.0	3.68
Maine	169	1,243	1	0.6	0.80
Maryland	608	5,071	8	1.3	1.58
Massachusetts	417	6,092	7	1.7	1.15
Michigan	1,505	9,594	33	2.2	3.44
Minnesota	576	4,657	6	1.0	1.29
Mississippi	811	2,716	5	0.6	1.84
Missouri	1,149	5,358	4	0.3	0.75
Montana	200	879	2	1.0	2.28
Nebraska	293	1,652	4	1.4	2.42
Nevada	348	1,603	6	1.7	3.74
New Hampshire	134	1,162	3	2.2	2.58
New Jersey	818	7,987	18	2.2	2.25
New Mexico	481	1,713	2	0.4	1.17
New York	1,564	18,184	45	2.9	2.47
North Carolina	1,493	7,322	37	2.5	5.05
North Dakota	85	643	0	0.0	0.00
Ohio	1,395	11,172	17	1.2	1.52
Oklahoma	772	3,300	5	0.6	1.52
Oregon	524	3,203	8	1.5	2.50
Pennsylvania	1,469	12,056	25	1.7	2.07
Rhode Island	69	990	2	2.9	2.02
South Carolina	930	3,698	18	1.9	4.87
South Dakota	175	732	2	1.1	2.73
Tennessee	1,239	5,319	5	0.4	0.94
Texas	3,741	19,128	59	1.6	3.08
Utah	321	2,000	9	2.8	4.50
Vermont	88	588	1	1.1	1.70
Virginia	875	6,675	10	1.1	1.50
Washington	712	5,532	14	2.0	2.53
West Virginia	345	1,825	4	1.2	2.19
Wisconsin	761	5,159	13	1.7	2.52
Wyoming	143	481	3	2.1	6.24
U.S. Total	41,907	265,284	761	1.8	2.87
Puerto Rico	601	3,783	17	2.8	4.50

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

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