

Bicyclists and Other Cyclists

“The 773 bicyclist deaths in 2006 accounted for 2 percent of all traffic fatalities during the year.”

Bicyclists and other cyclists include riders of two-wheel nonmotorized 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 51,000 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 2006, 773 pedalcyclists were killed and an additional 44,000 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 2006 is 1 percent higher than the 765 fatalities reported in 1996. 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 nonoccupant traffic fatalities in 2006.

Figure 1
Total Pedalcyclist Fatalities, 1996-2006

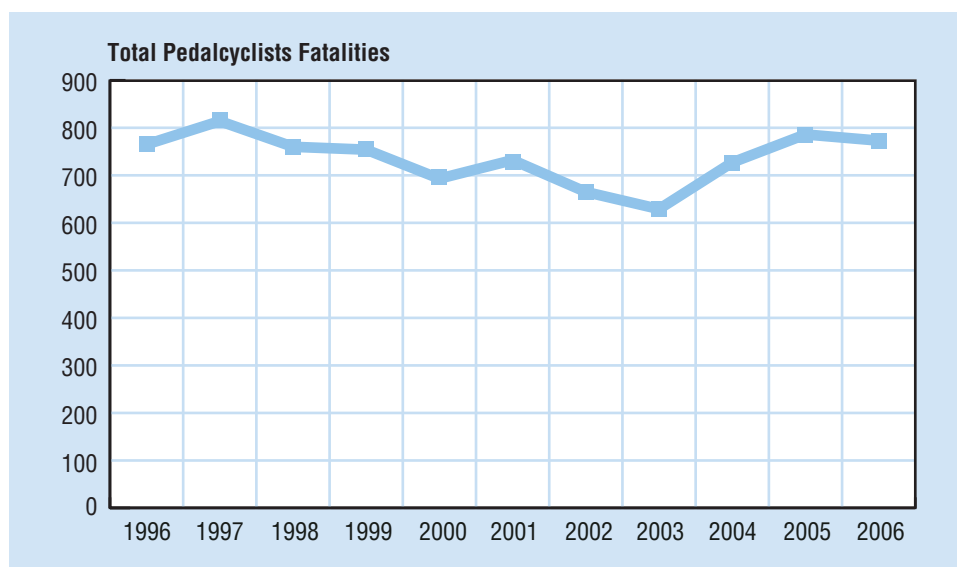


Table 1
Nonoccupant Traffic Fatalities, 1996-2006

Year	Pedalcyclist	Pedestrian	Other	Total
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	786	4,892	186	5,864
2006	773	4,784	183	5,740

“One-seventh of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 2006 were between 5 and 15 years old.”

Pedalcyclist fatalities occurred more frequently in urban areas (73%), at non-intersection locations (68%), between the hours of 5 and 9 p.m. (27%), and during the months of June, July, and August (33%).

Age

In 1996, the average age of pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes was 31; in 2006 the average age of those killed was 41. In contrast, in 1996 the average age of those injured was 23 and the average age of those injured in 2006 was 30.

Pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for 14 percent of all pedalcyclists killed and 28 percent of those injured in traffic crashes in 2006. In comparison, pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for 33 percent of all those killed and 45 percent of those injured in 1996.

Pedalcyclists age 25 and older have made up an increasing proportion of all pedalcyclist deaths since 1996. The proportion of pedalcyclist fatalities age 25 to 64 was 1.3 times higher in 2006 as in 1996 (62% and 46%, respectively).

One-seventh (14%) of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 2006 were between 5 and 15 years old. The pedalcyclist fatality rate for this age group in 2006 was 2.37 per million population — about 8 percent lower than the rate for all pedalcyclists (2.58 per million population). The injury rate for this age group was 269 per million population, compared with 147 per million population for pedalcyclists of all ages.

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 2006. In 32 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 8 percent. Over one-fourth (28%) of the pedalcyclists killed had a BAC of .01 g/dL or higher, and nearly one-fourth (24%) had a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher.

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Gender

Most of the pedalcyclists killed or injured in 2006 were males (88% and 82%, respectively), and most were between the ages of 5 and 44 years (53% and 75%, respectively).

In 2006, the pedalcyclist fatality rate per capita was 7 times higher for males than for females, and the injury rate per capita was more than 5 times higher for males.

Table 2

Pedalcyclists Killed and Injured and Fatality and Injury Rates by Age and Sex, 2006

Age (Years)	Male			Female			Total		
	Killed	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Killed	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Killed	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*
<5	1	10,442	0.1	2	9,976	0.2	3	20,418	0.15
5-9	35	10,077	3.47	7	9,633	0.73	42	19,710	2.13
10-15	56	12,779	4.38	8	12,176	0.66	64	24,955	2.56
16-20	50	10,878	4.6	6	10,312	0.58	56	21,189	2.64
21-24	28	8,751	3.2	5	8,167	0.61	33	16,918	1.95
25-34	80	20,565	3.89	13	19,851	0.65	93	40,416	2.3
35-44	100	21,850	4.58	19	21,817	0.87	119	43,667	2.73
45-54	147	21,290	6.9	14	21,989	0.64	161	43,278	3.72
55-64	95	15,224	6.24	7	16,363	0.43	102	31,587	3.23
65-74	46	8,670	5.31	5	10,247	0.49	51	18,917	2.7
75-84	25	5,298	4.72	6	7,748	0.77	31	13,047	2.38
85 +	7	1,688	4.15	2	3,609	0.55	9	5,297	1.7
Unknown	7	-	-	0	-	-	7	-	-
Total	677	147,512	4.59	94	151,886	0.62	771	299,398	2.58
Age (Years)	Male			Female			Total		
	Injured	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*	Killed	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*	Injured	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*
<5	**	10,442	5.91	**	9,976	1.34	**	20,418	3.68
5-9	2,000	10,077	246.2	**	9,633	45.04	3,000	19,710	147.9
10-15	8,000	12,779	596	2,000	12,176	133.2	9,000	24,955	370.2
16-20	6,000	10,878	518.5	1,000	10,312	62.77	6,000	21,189	296.7
21-24	2,000	8,751	283.3	1,000	8,167	119	3,000	16,918	204
25-34	4,000	20,565	198.3	1,000	19,851	71.46	5,000	40,416	136
35-44	5,000	21,850	217.8	1,000	21,817	39.2	6,000	43,667	128.6
45-54	5,000	21,290	238.5	1,000	21,989	31.6	6,000	43,278	133.4
55-64	3,000	15,224	188.8	1,000	16,363	63.59	4,000	31,587	123.9
65-74	1,000	8,670	107.6	**	10,247	6.78	1,000	18,917	52.98
75-84	**	5,298	32.99	**	7,748	8.96	**	13,047	18.72
85 +	**	**	***	**	**	***	**	**	***
Unknown	**	**	***	**	**	***	**	**	***
Total	36,000	147,512	245.2	8,000	151,886	51.59	44,000	299,398	147

* Rate per million population. ** Less than 500 injured. *** Less than 0.5 per million population

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, 2006

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Resident Population (thousands)	Pedalcyclist Fatalities	Percent of Total	Pedalcyclist Fatalities per Million Population
Alabama	1,208	4,599	10	0.8	2.17
Alaska	74	670	1	1.4	1.49
Arizona	1,288	6,166	29	2.3	4.7
Arkansas	665	2,811	3	0.5	1.07
California	4,236	36,458	141	3.3	3.87
Colorado	535	4,753	10	1.9	2.1
Connecticut	301	3,505	5	1.7	1.43
Delaware	148	853	4	2.7	4.69
District of Columbia	37	582	0	0	0
Florida	3,374	18,090	132	3.9	7.3
Georgia	1,693	9,364	19	1.1	2.03
Hawaii	161	1,285	4	2.5	3.11
Idaho	267	1,466	2	0.7	1.36
Illinois	1,254	12,832	25	2	1.95
Indiana	899	6,314	21	2.3	3.33
Iowa	439	2,982	5	1.1	1.68
Kansas	468	2,764	6	1.3	2.17
Kentucky	913	4,206	5	0.5	1.19
Louisiana	982	4,288	24	2.4	5.6
Maine	188	1,322	4	2.1	3.03
Maryland	651	5,616	7	1.1	1.25
Massachusetts	430	6,437	6	1.4	0.93
Michigan	1,085	10,096	28	2.6	2.77
Minnesota	494	5,167	8	1.6	1.55
Mississippi	911	2,911	3	0.3	1.03
Missouri	1,096	5,843	7	0.6	1.2
Montana	263	945	2	0.8	2.12
Nebraska	269	1,768	2	0.7	1.13
Nevada	432	2,496	10	2.3	4.01
New Hampshire	127	1,315	2	1.6	1.52
New Jersey	772	8,725	12	1.6	1.38
New Mexico	484	1,955	6	1.2	3.07
New York	1,456	19,306	45	3.1	2.33
North Carolina	1,559	8,857	21	1.3	2.37
North Dakota	111	636	0	0	0
Ohio	1,238	11,478	17	1.4	1.48
Oklahoma	765	3,579	6	0.8	1.68
Oregon	477	3,701	14	2.9	3.78
Pennsylvania	1,525	12,441	13	0.9	1.04
Rhode Island	81	1,068	1	1.2	0.94
South Carolina	1,037	4,321	16	1.5	3.7
South Dakota	191	782	1	0.5	1.28
Tennessee	1,287	6,039	7	0.5	1.16
Texas	3,475	23,508	51	1.5	2.17
Utah	287	2,550	10	3.5	3.92
Vermont	87	624	0	0	0
Virginia	963	7,643	12	1.2	1.57
Washington	630	6,396	7	1.1	1.09
West Virginia	410	1,818	1	0.2	0.55
Wisconsin	724	5,557	8	1.1	1.44
Wyoming	195	515	0	0	0
U.S. Total	42,642	299,398	773	1.8	2.58
Puerto Rico	507	3,928	20	3.9	5.09

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 traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NVS-421, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. NCSA can be contacted on 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.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/ncsa>. 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*, *African American*, *Children*, *Hispanic*, *Large Trucks*, *Motorcycles*, *Occupant Protection*, *Older Population*, *Pedestrians*, *Race and Ethnicity*, *Rural/Urban Comparisons*, *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 <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/CMSWeb/index.aspx>.