

Traffic Safety Facts 1993

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 pedalcyclist rider (*Famous First Facts*, by Joseph Kane).

Nearly 42,000 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.

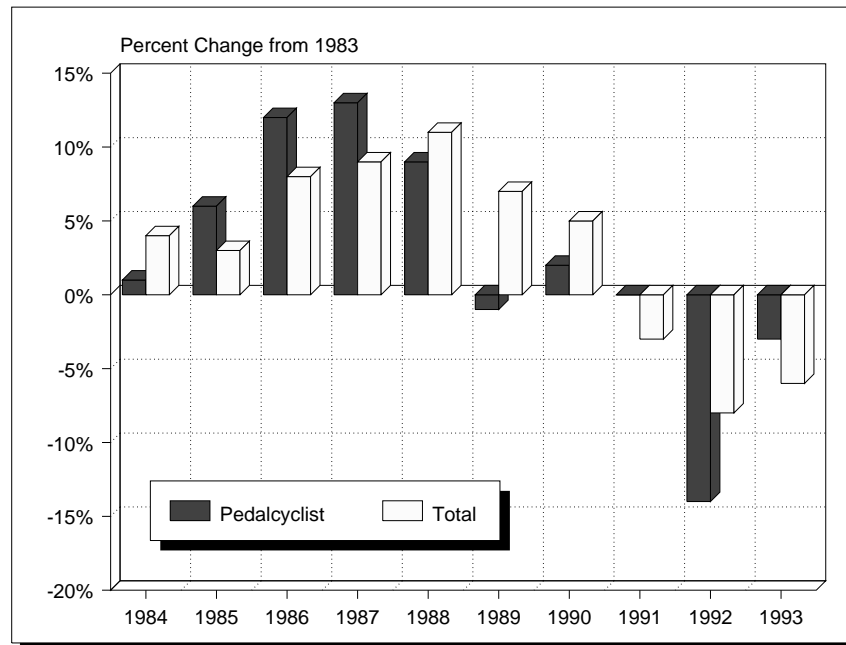
In 1993, 814 pedalcyclists were killed in traffic crashes. Pedalcyclist deaths accounted for 2 percent of all traffic fatalities during the year.

The number of pedalcyclist fatalities in 1993 was 3 percent lower than the 839 fatalities reported in 1983. The highest number of pedalcyclist fatalities ever recorded in the Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) was 1,003 in 1975.

The average age of pedalcyclist fatalities was 20.8 years in 1983; in 1993 the average age was 27.8 years.

“Pedalcyclist deaths accounted for 2 percent of all traffic fatalities during 1993.”

Figure 1. Trends in Pedalcyclist and Total Traffic Fatalities, 1983-1993



Pedalcyclists accounted for 12 percent of all nonmotorist traffic fatalities in 1993. Pedestrians accounted for 86 percent, and the remaining 2 percent were skateboard riders, roller skaters, etc.

Table 1. Nonoccupant Traffic Fatalities, 1983-1993

Year	Pedestrian	Pedalcyclist	Other	Total
1983	6,826	839	81	7,746
1984	7,025	849	99	7,973
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
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	5,638	814	110	6,562

“More than one-third of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 1993 were between 5 and 15 years old.”

Pedalcyclist fatalities occurred more frequently in urban areas (60 percent), at nonintersection locations (69 percent), between the hours of 4:00 PM and 8:00 PM (34 percent), and during the summer months of June, July, and August (39 percent).

Most pedalcyclist fatalities in 1993 were males (87 percent), and most were between the ages of 5 and 44 years (79 percent).

The pedalcyclist fatality rate per capita was 7 times as high for males as for females.

Pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for less than one-half (38 percent) of all pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 1993, compared with 53 percent in 1983.

Pedalcyclists 25 years of age and older have made up an increasing proportion of all pedalcyclist deaths since 1983. The proportion of pedalcyclist fatalities age 25 to 64 was twice as high in 1993 as in 1983 (41 percent and 20 percent, respectively).

More than one-third (36.1 percent) of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 1993 were between 5 and 15 years old. The pedalcyclist fatality rate for this age group was 7.3 per million population—more than twice the rate for all pedalcyclists (3.2 per million population).

“Alcohol involvement—either for the driver or the cyclist—was reported in more than a third of pedalcyclist fatalities in 1993.”

For 65 percent of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 1993, 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,” followed by “improper crossing of the roadway or intersection” and “failure to obey traffic signs and traffic control devices.” Fewer than half 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” (22 percent), “drivers were inattentive (talking, eating, etc.)” (15 percent), and “vision obscured” (13 percent).

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 1993. In 27.7 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 8.5 percent. Almost one-fourth of the pedalcyclists killed had a BAC of 0.01 g/dl or greater, and nearly one-fifth were intoxicated.

Table 2 presents summary statistics for 1993 pedalcyclist fatalities by age and sex, and Table 3 presents detailed data by state.

Table 2. Pedalcyclist Fatalities and Fatality Rates by Age and Sex, 1993

Age (years)	Male			Female			Total		
	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Fatalities	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*
<5	12	10,078	1.19	4	9,625	0.42	16	19,703	0.81
5-9	87	9,483	9.17	22	9,037	2.43	109	18,520	5.89
10-15	153	11,283	13.56	32	10,737	2.98	185	22,020	8.40
16-20	66	8,895	7.42	2	8,451	0.24	68	17,346	3.92
21-24	35	7,727	4.53	7	7,473	0.94	42	15,200	2.76
25-34	129	20,958	6.16	9	20,948	0.43	138	41,906	3.29
35-44	86	20,240	4.25	14	20,590	0.68	100	40,830	2.45
45-54	51	14,010	3.64	8	14,655	0.55	59	28,665	2.06
55-64	37	9,932	3.73	3	10,995	0.27	40	20,927	1.91
65-69	15	4,509	3.33	4	5,511	0.73	19	10,020	1.90
70-79	25	6,329	3.95	0	8,805	0.00	25	15,134	1.65
80+	9	2,455	3.67	0	5,183	0.00	9	7,638	1.18
Unknown	4			0			4		
Total	709	125,898	5.63	105	132,010	0.80	814	257,908	3.16

* 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. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

“Serving the Highway Safety Community by the Numbers”

Table 3. Pedalcyclist Traffic Fatalities and Fatality Rates by State, 1993

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Resident Population (thousands)	Pedalcyclist Fatalities	Percent of Total	Pedalcyclist Fatalities per Million Population
Alabama	1,042	4,187	7	0.7	1.67
Alaska	118	599	6	5.1	10.02
Arizona	801	3,936	25	3.1	6.35
Arkansas	583	2,424	7	1.2	2.89
California	4,163	31,211	129	3.1	4.13
Colorado	559	3,566	14	2.5	3.93
Connecticut	342	3,277	6	1.8	1.83
Delaware	111	700	1	0.9	1.43
District of Columbia	57	578	1	1.8	1.73
Florida	2,635	13,679	120	4.6	8.77
Georgia	1,394	6,917	22	1.6	3.18
Hawaii	134	1,172	3	2.2	2.56
Idaho	227	1,099	2	0.9	1.82
Illinois	1,392	11,697	28	2.0	2.39
Indiana	889	5,713	9	1.0	1.58
Iowa	459	2,814	4	0.9	1.42
Kansas	428	2,531	4	0.9	1.58
Kentucky	871	3,789	8	0.9	2.11
Louisiana	879	4,295	25	2.8	5.82
Maine	185	1,229	5	2.7	4.05
Maryland	665	4,965	9	1.4	1.81
Massachusetts	475	6,012	13	2.7	2.17
Michigan	1,408	9,478	30	2.1	3.17
Minnesota	538	4,517	9	1.7	1.99
Mississippi	813	2,643	3	0.4	1.14
Missouri	947	5,234	8	0.8	1.53
Montana	195	839	1	0.5	1.19
Nebraska	254	1,607	6	2.4	3.73
Nevada	263	1,389	9	3.4	6.48
New Hampshire	121	1,125	2	1.7	1.80
New Jersey	788	7,879	18	2.3	2.28
New Mexico	431	1,616	5	1.2	3.09
New York	1,781	18,197	42	2.4	2.31
North Carolina	1,389	6,945	31	2.2	4.46
North Dakota	89	635	1	1.1	1.57
Ohio	1,482	11,091	15	1.0	1.35
Oklahoma	671	3,231	7	1.0	2.17
Oregon	524	3,032	15	2.9	4.95
Pennsylvania	1,529	12,048	23	1.5	1.91
Rhode Island	74	1,000	1	1.4	1.00
South Carolina	846	3,643	27	3.2	7.41
South Dakota	140	715	0	0.0	0.00
Tennessee	1,171	5,099	16	1.4	3.14
Texas	3,037	18,031	52	1.7	2.88
Utah	303	1,860	11	3.6	5.91
Vermont	110	576	0	0.0	0.00
Virginia	878	6,491	14	1.6	2.16
Washington	661	5,255	8	1.2	1.52
West Virginia	429	1,820	2	0.5	1.10
Wisconsin	714	5,038	10	1.4	1.98
Wyoming	120	470	0	0.0	0.00
U.S. Total	40,115	257,908	814	2.0	3.16
Puerto Rico	600	* 3,580	19	3.2	5.33

* 1992 resident population for Puerto Rico.

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

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