



National Motorcycle Injury Facts as reported by the NHTSA and NCSA

In 2004, 76,000 motorcyclists were injured in traffic crashes in the United States —14 percent more than the 67,000 motorcyclist injuries reported in 2003.

Motorcyclist Injuries and Injury Rates, 1994-2004

Year	Injuries	Registered Vehicles	Injury Rate*	Vehicle Miles Traveled (millions)	Injury Rate**
1994	54000	3756555	1528	10240	561
1995	54000	3897191	1475	9797	587
1996	55000	3871599	1428	9920	557
1997	53000	3826373	1374	10081	522
1998	49000	3879450	1262	10283	576
1999	50000	4152433	1204	10584	572
2000	58000	4346068	1328	10469	551
2001	60000	4903056	1229	9639	625
2002	65000	5004156	1293	9552	677
2003	67000	5370035	1250	9539	703
2004	76000	---	---	---	---

*Rate per 100,000 registered vehicles. **Rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled.

--- = not available. Source: Vehicle miles traveled and registered vehicles - Federal Highway Administration. . Traffic injuries - General Estimates System (GES), NHTSA

Motorcycles made up more than 2 percent of all registered vehicles in the United States in 2003 and accounted for only 0.3 percent of all vehicle miles traveled. Per vehicle mile traveled in 2003, motorcyclists were about 6 times more likely to be injured.

Motorcycle Involvement in Injury Crashes

In 2004, In two-vehicle crashes, 78 percent of the motorcycles involved were impacted in the front. Only 6 percent were struck in the rear.

Motorcycles are more likely than other vehicles to be involved in a an injury collision with a fixed object. In 2004, 11 percent of the reported injury crashes involving motorcycles were fixed object crashes, compared to 9 percent for passenger cars, 7 percent for light trucks, and 4 percent for large trucks.



Helmet Use and Effectiveness

NHTSA estimates that helmets saved the lives of 1,316 motorcyclists in 2004. If all motorcyclists had worn helmets, an additional 671 lives could have been saved.

Helmets are estimated to be 37 percent effective in preventing fatal injuries to motorcyclists.

This means for every 100 motorcyclists killed in crashes while not wearing a helmet, 37 of them could have been saved had all 100 worn a helmet.

According to NHTSA's National Occupant Protection Use Survey, a nationally representative observational survey of motorcycle helmet, safety belt, and child safety seat use, helmet use declined by 13 percentage points over 4 years, from 71 percent in 2000 to 58 percent in 2004. This drop is statistically significant and corresponds to a striking 45-percent increase in nonuse.

Reported helmet use rates for fatally injured motorcyclists in 2004 were 56 percent for operators and 47 percent for passengers, compared with 53 percent and 50 percent, respectively, in 2003.

All motorcycle helmets sold in the United States are required to meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 218, the performance standard which establishes the minimum level of protection helmets must afford each user.

In 2004, 20 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico required helmet use by all motorcycle operators and passengers. In another 27 States, only persons under a specific age, usually 18, were required to wear helmets. Three States had no laws requiring helmet use.

For more information:

Information on motorcycle traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NPO-101, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. NCSA information can also be obtained by telephone or by fax-on-demand at 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 www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/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, Occupant Protection, Older Population, Speeding, Young Drivers, Pedestrians, Pedalcyclists, Children, Large Trucks, School Transportation-Related Crashes, State Traffic Data, and State Alcohol Estimates*. 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*.