

Traffic Safety Facts

2014 Data

July 2016

DOT HS 812 292



Motorcycles

Key Findings

- In 2014 there were 4,586 motorcyclists killed—a 2-percent decrease from the 4,692 motorcyclists killed in 2013.
- There were an estimated 92,000 motorcyclists injured during 2014, a 5-percent increase from 88,000 motorcyclist injured in 2013.
- Per vehicle mile traveled, motorcyclist fatalities occurred 27 times more frequently than passenger car occupant fatalities in traffic crashes.
- Twenty-eight percent of motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes in 2014 were riding their vehicles without valid motorcycle licenses.
- In 2014 motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes were found to have the highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers than any other vehicle type (29% for motorcycles, 22% for passenger cars and light trucks, and 2% for large trucks).
- Forty-three percent of motorcycle riders who died in single-vehicle crashes in 2014 were alcohol-impaired.
- Motorcycle riders killed in traffic crashes at night were almost three times more frequently alcohol-impaired than those killed during the day.
- NHTSA estimates that helmets saved 1,669 motorcyclists' lives in 2014, and that 660 more could have been saved if all motorcyclists had worn helmets.
- In States without universal helmet laws, 58 percent of motorcyclists killed in 2014 were not wearing helmets, as compared to 8 percent in States with universal helmet laws.

The following definitions apply to terms used throughout this fact sheet: Motorcycles are defined as two- or three-wheeled motorcycles, off-road motorcycles, mopeds, scooters, mini bikes, and pocket bikes. ~~The term "motorcyclist" is the person operating a motorcycle, with passenger or passengers seated on, but not operating, the motorcycle; the motorcyclist is a general term referring to either the rider or passenger.~~ NHTSA publications prior to 2007 may not reflect this terminology. For the purpose of this fact sheet, the term alcohol-impaired defines motorcycle riders with blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher.

In this fact sheet, the 2014 motorcycle information is presented as follows:

- Overview
- Registration
- Crash Involvement
- Speeding
- Age
- Motorcycle Engine Size
- Licensing and Previous Driving Records
- Alcohol
- Helmet Use and Effectiveness

Overview

In 2014 there were 4,586 motorcyclists killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes—a decrease of 2 percent from the 4,692 motorcyclists killed in 2013. There were an estimated 92,000 motorcyclists injured during 2014, a 5-percent increase from 88,000 motorcyclists injured in 2013. In 2014 two-wheeled motorcycles accounted for 93 percent of all motorcycles in fatal crashes.

In 2014 motorcyclists accounted for 14 percent of all traffic fatalities, 4 percent of all people injured, 17 percent of all occupants (driver and passenger) fatalities, and 4 percent of all occupants injured. Of the 4,586 motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes, 94 percent (4,311) were riders and 6 percent (275) were passengers.

Table 1 presents information about motorcyclists killed and injured over the decade from 2005 to 2014. During this time both the number of injured people and people killed peaked around 2007 and 2008 but have fallen slightly since that time. The number of registered motorcycles and motorcycle vehicle miles traveled (VMT) are also presented in Table 1, along with the respective fatality and injury rates. When reviewing the registered vehicles and VMT data and rates over the 10-year period, note the change in methodology in collection of the data starting in 2007.



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