



JUST THE STATS

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Carjacking Victimization, 1995–2021

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Key findings

- Based on 3-year moving averages, the rate of nonfatal carjacking victimization¹ declined 78%, from 0.53 per 1,000 persons age 16 or older in 1995 to 0.12 per 1,000 in 2021 ([figure 1](#)).²
- Over the past 10 years (2012–2021), the rate of nonfatal carjacking victimization has ranged from 0.09 per 1,000 persons to 0.15 per 1,000.
- During 2012–21, nonfatal carjackings were more likely to take place at or near the victim's home (39%) than in other locations ([table 1](#)).
- The majority of nonfatal carjackings involved an offender with a weapon (59%). Offenders armed with firearms accounted for 38% of nonfatal carjackings.
- Victims were as likely to resist the offender in a nonfatal carjacking (53%) as to not resist during the crime (47%). About one in four (26%) nonfatal carjackings resulted in victim injury.
- Offenders in nonfatal carjackings were more likely to be strangers to the victim (64%) than known to the victim (26%).
- Males were as likely as females to experience nonfatal carjackings (0.12 per 1,000 each) ([table 2](#)).
- Black persons (0.26 per 1,000) were more likely than white persons (0.07 per 1,000) and as likely as Hispanic persons (0.22 per 1,000) to experience nonfatal carjackings.
- The rate of nonfatal carjacking victimization of persons in households with annual incomes of below \$75,000 (0.16 per 1,000) was more than three times that of those in households with incomes of \$75,000 or more (0.05 per 1,000).

¹Because the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is based on interviews with victims, it does not collect information on fatal carjackings.

²In this report, statistical significance is reported at both the 90% and 95% confidence levels. See figure and tables for testing on specific findings.

FIGURE 1

Rate of nonfatal carjacking victimization per 1,000 persons age 16 or older, 1995–2021 (3-year moving averages)



Note: Estimates are based on 3-year moving averages (e.g., the 1995 estimate averages the rates for 1993, 1994, and 1995). Estimates that include 2006 data are excluded from the figure. For more information on data comparability and changes to the 2006 National Crime Victimization Survey, see *Criminal Victimization, 2007* (NCJ 224390, BJS, December 2008). See appendix table 1 for rates and standard errors. Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1995–2021.

Nonfatal carjacking measure

To measure nonfatal carjacking using data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), cases were selected that met these criteria: (a) a completed or attempted robbery occurred, (b) the victim was age 16 or older, and (c) a car or other motor vehicle, such as a truck or any other motorized vehicle legally allowed on public roads or highways, was taken or an attempt was made to take such a vehicle. For additional methodological details regarding the NCVS, see *Methodology in Criminal Victimization, 2021* (NCJ 305101, BJS, September 2022).

Figure 1 features trend estimates of nonfatal carjacking victimization with 3-year moving averages. Tables 1 and 2 show an aggregate period of multiple years. These approaches increase the reliability and stability of the nonfatal carjacking estimates.

TABLE 1
Characteristics of nonfatal carjacking victimizations, 2012–21

Characteristic	Percent of nonfatal carjacking victimizations	Standard error
Number of victims		
One victim*	90%	4.3%
Two or more victims	10 †	4.1
Location of residence^a		
Principal city within MSA*	51%	7.0%
Not part of principal city within MSA	46	7.0
Outside MSA	3 †	2.3
Location of victimization		
At or near victim's home*	39%	6.8%
In parking lot or garage	19 †	5.3
On street, not near home	22 ‡	5.6
At or near a friend's or neighbor's home	8 †	3.6
Other commercial building or other location	13 †	4.5
Of completed carjackings		
Car recovered*	55%	8.7%
Not recovered/Unknown	45	8.6
Offender armed		
Yes	59% †	6.9%
Firearm	38	6.8
Knife	11 †	4.3
Other or unknown weapon type ^b	10 †	4.0
No*	31	6.4
Unknown if offender was armed	10 †	4.0
Victim resisted offender^c		
Yes*	53%	7.0%
No	47	7.0
Victim injured		
Yes*	26%	6.1%
No	74 †	6.3
Victim/offender relationship		
Stranger*	64%	6.8%
Known ^d	26 †	6.1
Do not know relationship	10 †	3.9

*Comparison group.

†Significant difference from comparison group at the 95% confidence level.

‡Significant difference from comparison group at the 90% confidence level.

! Interpret with caution. Coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

^aMSA stands for Metropolitan Statistical Area. The Office of Management and Budget defines MSA as a population nucleus of 50,000 or more, generally consisting of a city and its immediate suburbs, along with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with the nucleus. A principal city is the largest city in each MSA. Additional cities qualify if specified requirements are met concerning population size and employment.

^bIncludes other sharp objects such as an ice pick, blunt objects such as a rock, other weapons, and unknown weapon types.

^cResistance is not restricted to physical resistance.

^dIncludes intimate partners, other relatives, and well-known or casual acquaintances of the victim.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2012–2021.

TABLE 2
Rate of nonfatal carjacking victimization, by victim characteristics, 2012–21

Victim characteristic	Rate of nonfatal carjacking victimization per 1,000 persons age 16 or older	Standard error
Total	0.12	0.019
Sex		
Male*	0.12	0.026
Female	0.12	0.025
Race/Hispanic origin		
White ^a	0.07 †	0.017
Black ^{a*}	0.26	0.074
Hispanic	0.22	0.059
Other ^{a,b}	0.12 †	0.057
Age		
16-19	0.06 †	0.043
20-24	0.22	0.077
25-34*	0.23	0.058
35-49	0.13	0.036
50-64	0.09 †	0.029
65 or older	0.03 †	0.019
Marital status		
Never married*	0.17	0.038
Married	0.08 †	0.020
Widowed	0.12 †	0.066
Divorced/separated	0.17	0.057
Annual household income^c		
Below \$75,000*	0.16	0.032
\$75,000 or more	0.05 †	0.021

*Comparison group.

†Significant difference from comparison group at the 95% confidence level.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

^aExcludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

^bIncludes persons who identified as Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or American Indian or Alaska Native only or as two or more races. Categories are not shown separately due to small numbers of sample cases.

^cPersons in households with unknown annual incomes were victims in 27% of nonfatal carjackings from 2012 to 2021.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2012–2021.

APPENDIX TABLE 1**Rates and standard errors for figure 1. Rate of nonfatal carjacking victimization per 1,000 persons age 16 or older, 1995–2021 (3-year moving averages)**

Year	Rate	Standard error
1995	0.53 †	0.075
1996	0.48 †	0.066
1997	0.40 †	0.064
1998	0.30 †	0.068
1999	0.35 †	0.074
2000	0.31 †	0.066
2001	0.31 †	0.065
2002	0.19	0.052
2003	0.23 ‡	0.056
2004	0.19	0.051
2005	0.22 ‡	0.052
2006	--	--
2007	--	--
2008	--	--
2009	0.15	0.045
2010	0.13	0.040
2011	0.09	0.029
2012	0.09	0.027
2013	0.12	0.036
2014	0.15	0.034
2015	0.14	0.035
2016	0.11	0.031
2017	0.09	0.026
2018	0.10	0.020
2019	0.10	0.025
2020	0.10	0.023
2021*	0.12	0.029

Note: Estimates are based on 3-year moving averages (e.g., the 1995 estimate averages the rates for 1993, 1994, and 1995).

--Estimates that include 2006 data are excluded. See *Criminal Victimization, 2007* (NCJ 224390, BJS, December 2008) for more information on data comparability and changes to the 2006 National Crime Victimization Survey.

*Comparison year.

†Significant difference from comparison year at the 95% confidence level.

‡Significant difference from comparison year at the 90% confidence level.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1995–2021.



The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates reliable statistics on crime and justice systems in the United States, supports improvements to state and local criminal justice information systems, and participates with national and international organizations to develop and recommend national standards for justice statistics. Alexis R. Piquero is the director.

This report was written by Erika Harrell, Ph.D. Rachel E. Morgan, Ph.D., verified the report.

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