

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

FACT SHEET

American Driving Survey: 2014 – 2015

Background

- Detailed data regarding when, where, and how much people drive is fundamental to traffic safety research.
- Existing federal data sources are vital, but have significant limitations.
- The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety has been collecting detailed driving information from a representative sample of U.S. drivers on an ongoing basis since May 2013.

Objective

- To provide in-depth national estimates on Americans' driving habits every year.

Sampling and Survey Methodology

- Data are collected every day of the year in telephone interviews with a representative sample of U.S. drivers aged 16 years and older.
- Respondents are selected from a random sample of landline and cell phone numbers nationwide.
 - Drivers ages 16-19, ages 75+, and drivers who drive more frequently are oversampled from among the members of the sampled households.
 - Each driver reports detailed information about all of the driving trips that they made in a 24-hour period the day before the interview.
 - Interviews are conducted in English and in Spanish.
 - Data in this report are from interviews conducted January 2, 2014 – December 31, 2015.
 - Data are weighted to produce estimates of driving by all drivers nationwide.
- Sample sizes:
 - Household-level statistics are based on data from 7,576 households.
 - Statistics about the general driving population are based on 15,469 people residing in those households.
 - Statistics regarding driving trips, minutes, and miles are based on data from 5,774 drivers sampled from those households.



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Key Findings

- An average of 87.5% of all U.S. residents aged 16 years and older reported that they drive.
- U.S. drivers reported making an average of 2.1 driving trips per day, covering an average of 29.8 miles and spending an average of 48.4 minutes driving, which translates to an average of 763 trips, 10,874 miles, and 294 hours of driving annually.
 - On average, women reported more daily driving trips than men, but men reported spending more time behind the wheel and driving more miles than women—2,314 more miles annually.
 - Drivers aged 75 and older reported driving the fewest miles, an estimated 5,840 annually. On any given day, nearly half of all drivers aged 75 and older do not do any driving. In contrast, drivers aged 30-49 reported driving approximately 13,506 miles annually—significantly more than the national average for all ages.
 - Drivers who live in rural areas reported driving an average of 13,029 miles annually, which is significantly more than drivers who live in cities or towns. Drivers who live in cities or towns actually make more driving trips than drivers in rural areas, but trips in rural areas are much longer, resulting in greater total distances traveled in rural areas despite taking fewer trips.
 - Drivers in the Midwest and South drive an average of 11,295 miles annually, significantly more than the 9,328 miles driven by drivers in the Northeast.
 - On average, Americans do the most driving during the fall months (October – December) and the least in the winter months (January – March).
 - Approximately 66% of all driving trips and 62% of all miles of driving are done by drivers with no passengers in their vehicle. Women were 24% more likely than men to have one or more passengers in their vehicle on any given trip.
 - More than half of all miles driven by Americans are driven in cars; 20% are driven in SUVs, 17% in pickup trucks, 8% in vans, and 4% in various other types of vehicles.
- Most households (58%) have one vehicle for every driver; 28% have more vehicles than drivers, and 14% have fewer vehicles than drivers.
- In total, Americans drove an estimated 2.45 trillion miles in light vehicles (cars, pickup trucks, vans, minivans, SUVs, etc.) in 2015, representing a 2.4% increase from 2014. Although the average number of miles driven daily by each individual driver increased by only an estimated 0.8%, increases in both the population of the United States and the proportion of driving-aged adults who drive contributed to a 1.5% increase in the total number of drivers on the road.

For more information on this study and the AAA Foundation's other traffic safety research and materials, please visit AAAFoundation.org.

Established in 1947 by AAA, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a not-for-profit, publicly funded, 501(c)(3) charitable research and educational organization. The AAA Foundation's mission is to prevent traffic deaths and injuries by conducting research into their causes and by educating the public about strategies to prevent crashes and reduce injuries when they do occur. This research is used to develop educational materials for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists and other road users. Visit www.AAAFoundation.org for more information.

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