



Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin

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National Crime Victimization Survey

Crime and the Nation's Households, 2004

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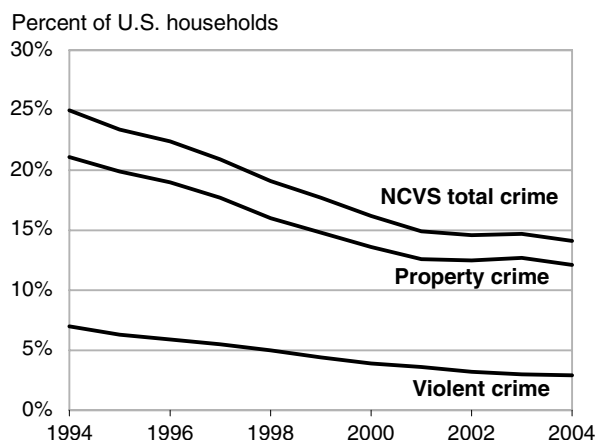
In 2004, 14% of households in the United States, accounting for 16 million households, experienced 1 or more violent or property victimizations as measured by the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). These crimes include rape/sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, purse snatching or pocket picking, household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and property theft.

In 2004, 3% of households had a member age 12 or older who experienced one or more violent crimes. Simple assault was the type of violent crime sustained by most households. Twelve percent of households experienced one or more property crimes, with theft the most widely sustained. There were no real differences between 2003 and 2004 in the percentage of households experiencing total crimes.

Both violent and property crime declined between 1994 and 2004. The percentage of U.S. households experiencing one or more crimes dropped from 25% in 1994 to 14% in 2004.

Highlights

The percentage of U.S. households experiencing one or more crimes dropped from 25% in 1994 to 14% in 2004



- Both violent and property crimes declined between 1994 and 2004.
- Households with at least one member who experienced a violent crime declined from 7% in 1994 to 3% in 2004.
- Households experiencing property crimes declined from 21% in 1994 to 12% in 2004.
- In 2004 about 16 million households experienced one or more property crimes or had a member age 12 or older who experienced one or more violent crimes.
- About 1 in every 27 households in 2004 were either burglarized or had a member age 12 or older who was a victim of a violent crime committed by a stranger. The portion of households affected by these crimes has fallen since 1994, but did not change between 2003 and 2004.
- In 2004 about 1 in 250 households included a member victimized by an intimate partner, such as a spouse, ex-spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend.
- About 5% of households had at least one incident of vandalism in 2004. Over 5.6 million households were vandalized during this period.

Table 1. Households experiencing crime, by type of crime, 2004

Type of victimization	Households	
	Number	Percent
Any NCVS crime	16,365,700	14.1%
Personal crime	3,534,890	3.1%
Violent crime*	3,383,160	2.9
Rape	79,250	0.1
Sexual assault	75,960	0.1
Robbery	377,060	0.3
Assault	2,943,930	2.5
Aggravated	756,230	0.7
Simple	2,328,530	2.0
Purse snatching/ pocket picking	179,010	0.2%
Property crime	14,032,570	12.1%
Household burglary	2,899,610	2.5
Motor vehicle theft	929,520	0.8
Theft	11,169,800	9.6

Note: Detail does not add to total or crime subtotals because of overlap in households experiencing various crimes. There were a total of 115,775,572 households in 2004. If vandalism is included among the victimizations, a total of 20,259,649 households (17.5%) experienced at least one crime in 2004.

*Violent crime does not include homicide.

Fourteen percent of U.S. households experienced one or more crimes in 2004

About 16 million households experienced 1 or more of the victimizations measured by the NCVS, an ongoing household survey that collects information about crimes both unreported and reported to police. These victimized households made up about 14% of the 115.8 million households in the United States.

Crime	Percent of households	
	2003	2004
Any NCVS	14.7%	14.1%
Violent	3.0	2.9
Property	12.7	12.1

About 3% of households had an adolescent or adult member who was victimized by one or more crimes of violence during the year. NCVS interviews all members of a household age 12 or older and does not estimate victimizations of children younger than 12. The measured violent crimes, which include rape, sexual assault, robbery and simple and aggravated assault, affected members of about 1

in every 34 U.S. households. There were no significant changes in violent crimes in any of the categories between 2003 and 2004. About 2.3 million households had members who experienced simple assault, the most frequently encountered crime of violence. Simple assault does not result in serious injury and does not involve a weapon.

About 12% of all households in 2004 experienced one or more property crimes, such as household burglary, motor vehicle theft or property theft. Theft, affecting 1 in 10 households, was the most frequently encountered property crime. There was some evidence that the percentage of households victimized by overall property crime decreased between 2003 and 2004. There was no change for household burglary, motor vehicle theft or property theft for these years.

Few households experienced the same type of crime more than once

For the households-victimized-by-crime measure, households that experienced the same type of crime more than once were counted only once for that victimization.

In 2004, about 1% of households had members victimized by more than one type of violence, including rape, sexual assault, robbery, and assault. About 1% of households were victimized by both violent and property crimes. Such households were counted once in the

Vandalism of residences or other property owned by an individual remains unchanged

Over 5.6 million households, 4.8% of all U.S. households had at least one incident of vandalism in 2004. First compiled by the NCVS in 2000, vandalism is not included in the overall measure of households experiencing victimization. If vandalism is included in the overall measure, the total percentage of households experiencing crime increases from 14% to 17%. There was no change in the percentage of households affected by vandalism between 2003 and 2004.

violent crime measure, once in the property crime measure, and once in the overall measure.

“Crimes of high concern” were experienced by 4% of households

Violence by strangers or household burglary are often cited as the most fear provoking crimes. The portion of these crimes has fallen since 1994 but did not change between 2003 and 2004. About 1 in every 27 households experienced household burglary or had a household member who experienced violence by a stranger during 2004 (figure 1). About 4.3 million households experienced these “crimes of high concern” in 2004.

Intimate partner violence affected about 1 in 250 households during 2004

Less than 1% of all households experienced intimate partner violence, which is violence committed by a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend (figure 2). Intimate partner violence declined between 1994 and 2004, but did not change between 2003 and 2004. One or more members

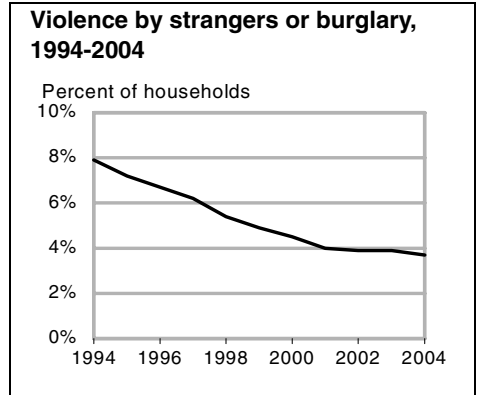


Figure 1

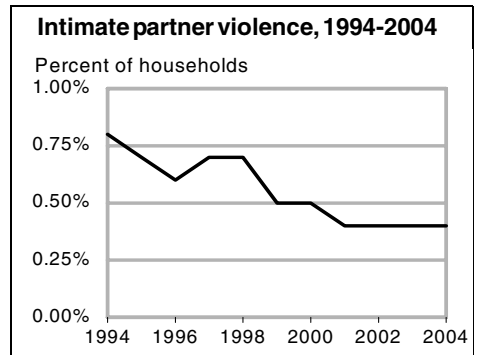


Figure 2

of about 458,000 households experienced at least one intimate partner victimization during 2004.

Black and Hispanic households were more vulnerable to crime

In 2004 households headed by blacks were more likely to experience crime (16%) than those headed by whites (14%) (table 2). Households headed by Hispanics were more likely to sustain one or more crimes than those headed by non-Hispanics (17% vs. 14%).

Crime	Percent of households	
	Hispanic head	Non-Hispanic head
Any NCVS crime	17.5%	13.8%
Violent	2.7	3.0
Property	15.5	11.7
Violence by strangers or burglary	4.4%	3.6%
Intimate partner violence	0.4%	0.4%

Prevalence of crime was higher for urban households, large households, and those in the West

Households in urban areas (18%) were more likely to experience one or more crimes than suburban households (13%) and rural households (12%) in 2004 (table 3).

Household size affected the likelihood of experiencing criminal victimization in 2004 (table 4). Twenty-five percent of households with six or more persons experienced one or more crimes compared with 20% of households made up of four or five persons, 14% of households with two or three persons, and 9% of one-person households.

Households located in the West were more likely to experience one or more crimes when compared with

Table 4. Households experiencing crime, by number of household members, 2004

Type of crime in the household	Percent of households, by number of members			
	1 member	2-3	4-5	6 or more
Any NCVS crime	9.5%	13.6%	20.4%	25.4%
Violent crime	1.9	2.7	4.5	6.3
Property crime	8.1	11.7	17.6	21.6
Violence by strangers or burglary	2.9%	3.6%	4.6%	6.9%
Intimate partner violence	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%	0.9%

Note: Murder and vandalism are not measured in this table.

Table 2. Households experiencing crime, by race of the household head, 2004

Type of crime in the household	Percent of heads of household			
	White	Black	Other race	More than one race
Any NCVS crime	13.9%	15.9%	12.8%	21.0%
Violent crime	2.9	3.3	1.9	6.2
Property crime	11.9	13.7	11.3	16.9
Violence by strangers or burglary	3.6%	4.8%	3.0%	7.3%
Intimate partner violence	0.4%	0.6%	0.1%	0.5%

Note: Beginning in 2003, multiple race entries were allowed. *White* refers to a household head who listed only white as racial background; *black* refers to those listing only black. Other race heads of household were Asians, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, or Pacific Islanders reporting a single racial background. Murder and vandalism are not measured in this table.

Table 3. Households experiencing crime, by urban, suburban, and rural location, 2004

Type of crime in the household	Percent of households		
	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Any NCVS crime	18.2%	12.7%	11.6%
Violent crime	3.8	2.5	2.8
Property crime	15.7	11.0	9.7
Violence by strangers or burglary	5.4	3.0	3.1
Intimate partner violence	0.5	0.3	0.5

Note: Murder and vandalism are not measured in this table.

households in other regions of the country.

Type of crime	Percent of households, 2004
Northeast	
Any NCVS crime	10.0%
Violent	2.2
Property	8.3
Midwest	
Any NCVS crime	14.8%
Violent	3.3
Property	12.5
South	
Any NCVS crime	13.7%
Violent	2.6
Property	12.0
West	
Any NCVS crime	17.7%
Violent	3.7
Property	15.2

Prevalence of crime in households decreased from 1994 to 2004

About 14% of households experienced one or more crimes in 2004, compared to about 25% of households in 1994 (table 5). The percentage of households experiencing either violent or property crime also declined. In 2004, about 3% of households had a member who experienced at least one violent crime, compared with 7% in 1994. For property crimes, 12% of households were affected in 2004, compared to 21% in 1994.

Table 5. Households experiencing crime, by type of crime, 1994 and 2004

	Percent of households	
	1994	2004
Any NCVS crime	25.0%	14.1%
Violent crime	7.0	2.9
Property crime	21.1	12.1
Violence by strangers or burglary	7.9%	3.7%
Intimate partner violence	0.8%	0.4%
Number of households experiencing some type of crime	25,103,670	16,365,700
U.S. total of all households	100,544,570	115,775,570



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Methodology

This Bulletin presents data on non-lethal violence and property crimes from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). In 2004, 84,360 households and 149,000 individuals age 12 or older were interviewed. For the 2004 NCVS data presented here, the response rate was 91.3% of eligible households and 85.5% of eligible individuals.

The households-victimized-by-crime measure counts each household once for the calendar year, regardless of the number of times a household experienced a particular type of crime. For the overall indicator, household-based crime estimates are derived from NCVS statistics on rape/sexual assault, robbery, assault, personal theft, household burglary, household theft, and motor vehicle theft. A household is counted if anyone in the household experienced one or more of any of these crimes within the year. For categories such as violent crime by a stranger or intimate partner crime, a household is counted if person(s) in the households were victimized one or

more times by that particular type of crime.

Detailed information about the construction of the households-victimized-by-crime measure, as well as data about households in prior years, is available in *Crime and the Nation's Households, 2000, with*

Trends, 1994-2000 <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cnh00.htm>>. For more explanation about general survey methodology and estimates of error, see the BJS Bulletin *Criminal Victimization 2004*, <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv04htm>>.

This report in portable document format and in ASCII and its related statistical data and tables—including five appendix tables—are available at the BJS World Wide Web Internet site: <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>>

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BJS Bulletins present the first release of findings from permanent data collection programs.

Patsy A. Klaus, BJS, wrote this report under the supervision of Michael R. Rand. Cathy T. Maston provided the statistical review. Tina Dorsey and Marianne Zawitz produced and edited the report. Jayne Robinson prepared the report for final printing.

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