



# Department of Justice

ADVANCE FOR RELEASE AT 4:30 P.M. EDT  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1996

BJS  
202/633-3047

## VICTIMS REPORT 9 PERCENT FEWER VIOLENT CRIMES LAST YEAR

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Violent crimes fell more than 9 percent last year, the Department of Justice announced today. According to preliminary estimates by the Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), there were an estimated 9.9 million violent crimes during 1995, compared to about 10.9 million during 1994.

BJS Director Jan Chaiken noted, "The drop in crime last year is consistent with what we know from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports."

Dr. Chaiken said the decline in the violent victimization rate began in 1994 and interrupted a rising trend that had existed since the mid 1980s, while crimes of theft continued a 20-year pattern of decreasing rates.

BJS estimates there were 39.6 million personal and household crimes of theft and violence during 1995, compared to 42.4 million the year before, which is a 6.6 percent decline.

Last year rape decreased almost 18 percent, robbery fell 14 percent, aggravated assault declined 19 percent and purse

(MORE)

snatching and pocket picking were down 18 percent.

There were 5.5 percent fewer property crimes a year ago than in 1994--29.3 million compared to 31 million the year before. The rate of property crimes--burglary, theft and motor vehicle theft--was 288 per 1,000 households; down from 308 per 1,000 in 1994.

Murders are not included in BJS's National Crime Victimization Survey because of an inability to interview victims. According to the FBI's preliminary 1995 data, murder estimates fell 8 percent from the level of the previous year. The FBI publishes the number of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies annually.

During 1995, the BJS survey of crime victims asked approximately 100,000 people 12 years old and older in 49,000 households about crimes they might have experienced during the previous six months. Therefore, the BJS survey is able to include both crimes reported to police and those that go unreported.

About 14.4 million of the violent and property crimes were reported to the police during 1995, down from the 15.2 million reported the previous year. About 63 percent of all crimes were never brought to official attention.

(MORE)

Final 1995 victimization estimates will be available later this year. Beginning at 4:30 p.m. EDT, Tuesday, September 17, the survey's graphs and tables will be available on BJS's Internet home page by clicking on "What's new at BJS" and then clicking at the Social Statistics Briefing Room. The BJS webpage address is:

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>

Additional BJS materials may be obtained from the BJS fax-on-demand (301/251-5550) or calling the BJS Clearinghouse 1-800/732-3277.

**Table 1. National Crime Victimization Survey:  
Victimization levels and rates, preliminary 1995**

	Number of victimizations			Victimization rates		
	1994	Preliminary 1995	Percent change	1994	Preliminary 1995	Percent change
<b>All crimes surveyed</b>	<b>42,359,370</b>	<b>39,582,880</b>	<b>-6.6%*</b>	...	...	
<b>Personal crimes</b>	<b>11,348,630</b>	<b>10,268,280</b>	<b>-9.5%*</b>	<b>53.1</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>-10.3%*</b>
Crimes of violence	10,859,700	9,866,200	-9.1%*	50.8	45.7	-10.0%*
Completed violence	3,205,230	2,896,800	-9.6*	15.0	13.4	-10.4*
Attempted/threatened violence	7,654,470	6,969,540	-8.9*	35.8	32.3	-9.8*
Rape/Sexual assault	432,700	354,670	-18.0	2.0	1.6	-18.8**
Rape/Attempted rape	316,140	260,310	-17.7	1.5	1.2	-18.4
Sexual assault*	116,570	94,580	-18.9	0.5	0.4	-19.6
Robbery	1,298,590	1,123,720	-13.5**	6.1	5.2	-14.2*
Completed/property taken	795,030	697,650	-12.2	3.7	3.2	-13.0
Attempted to take property	503,560	425,140	-15.6	2.4	2.0	-16.3**
Assault	9,128,400	8,390,010	-8.1*	42.7	38.9	-8.9*
Aggravated	2,477,940	2,010,370	-18.9*	11.6	9.3	-19.6*
With injury	678,540	516,460	-23.9*	3.2	2.4	-24.6*
Threatened with weapon	1,799,400	1,494,470	-16.9*	8.4	6.9	-17.7*
Simple	6,650,470	6,382,580	-4.0	31.1	29.6	-4.9
With minor injury	1,466,070	1,446,790	-1.3	6.9	6.7	-2.2
Without injury	5,184,400	4,936,940	-4.8	24.3	22.9	-5.6
Purse snatching/pocket picking	488,930	402,590	-17.7%**	2.3	1.9	-18.4%*
Total population age 12 or over	213,747,400	215,697,770		...	...	
<b>Property crimes</b>	<b>31,010,740</b>	<b>29,318,100</b>	<b>-5.5%*</b>	<b>307.6</b>	<b>288.1</b>	<b>-6.3%*</b>
Household burglary	5,482,300	4,848,350	-11.6*	54.4	47.7	-12.4*
Completed	4,572,560	4,172,940	-8.7*	45.4	41.0	-9.6*
Attempted forcible entry	909,750	687,940	-24.4*	9.0	6.8	-25.1*
Motor vehicle theft	1,763,540	1,603,980	-9.0**	17.5	15.8	-9.9*
Completed	1,172,200	1,086,170	-7.3	11.6	10.7	-8.2
Attempted	591,340	517,800	-12.4	5.9	5.1	-13.2*
Theft <sup>b</sup>	23,764,900	22,883,060	-3.7*	235.7	224.9	-4.6*
Completed	22,743,000	22,035,450	-3.1**	225.6	216.6	-4.0*
Attempted	1,021,900	856,800	-16.2*	10.1	8.4	-16.9*
Total number of households	100,808,030	101,747,040		...	...	

Note: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers. Victimization rates are calculated on the basis of the number of victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or over (personal crimes) or per 1,000 households (property crimes). Final estimates for 1994 are based on crimes occurring in 1994; preliminary estimates for 1995 are based on interviews conducted in 1995.

... Not applicable.  
\*Includes threats.

<sup>b</sup>Theft includes crimes previously classified as "Personal larceny without contact" and "Household larceny."

\*The preliminary difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

\*\*The preliminary difference is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

**Table 2. National Crime Victimization Survey:  
Number and proportion of crimes reported to police, preliminary 1995**

	Number of crimes reported to police			Proportion reported to police		
	1994	Preliminary 1995	Percent change	1994	Preliminary 1995	Percent change
<b>All crimes surveyed</b>	<b>15,186,500</b>	<b>14,445,930</b>	<b>-4.9%**</b>	<b>35.9%</b>	<b>36.5%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
<b>Personal crimes</b>	<b>4,672,830</b>	<b>4,410,890</b>	<b>-5.6%</b>	<b>41.2%</b>	<b>43.0%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
Crimes of violence	4,513,070	4,257,270	-5.7%	41.6%	43.2%	3.7%
Completed violence	1,751,890	1,665,760	-4.9	54.7	57.5	5.1
Attempted/threatened violence	2,761,170	2,591,720	-6.1	36.1	37.2	3.0
Rape/Sexual assault	137,100	113,190	-17.4	31.7	31.9	0.7
Rape/Attempted rape	89,620	67,510	-24.7	28.3	25.9	-8.4
Sexual assault <sup>a</sup>	47,480	46,950	-1.1	40.7	49.6	22.0
Robbery	718,900	642,780	-10.6	55.4	57.2	3.3
Completed/property taken	511,960	458,160	-10.5	64.4	65.7	2.0
Attempted to take property	206,940	184,590	-10.8	41.1	43.4	5.6
Assault	3,657,070	3,502,540	-4.2	40.1	41.7	4.1
Aggravated	1,277,810	1,082,900	-15.3*	51.6	53.9	4.4
With injury	411,200	338,110	-17.8	60.6	65.5	8.0
Threatened with weapon	866,600	744,310	-14.1**	48.2	49.8	3.3
Simple	2,379,270	2,428,010	2.0	35.8	38.0	6.3
With minor injury	727,420	776,820	6.8	49.6	53.7	8.3
Without injury	1,651,850	1,651,960	0.0	31.9	33.5	4.9
Purse snatching/pocket picking	159,570	153,760	-3.6%	32.6%	38.2%	17.2
<b>Property crimes</b>	<b>10,513,870</b>	<b>10,035,060</b>	<b>-4.6%*</b>	<b>33.9%</b>	<b>34.2%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
Household burglary	2,770,140	2,595,470	-6.3%	50.5	53.5	6.0*
Completed	2,425,140	2,285,090	-5.8	53.0	54.8	3.3
Attempted forcible entry	345,000	311,570	-9.7	37.9	45.3	19.5*
Motor vehicle theft	1,378,920	1,209,460	-12.3*	78.2	75.4	-3.6
Completed	1,083,170	980,600	-9.5	92.4	90.3	-2.3
Attempted	295,750	230,050	-22.2*	50.0	44.4	-11.1
Theft <sup>b</sup>	6,364,800	6,244,700	-1.9	26.8	27.3	1.8
Completed	6,060,620	6,001,480	-1.0	26.6	27.2	2.4
Attempted	304,180	244,860	-19.5**	29.8	28.6	-4.1

Note: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers. Also see the note on table 1.

<sup>a</sup>Includes threats.

<sup>b</sup>Theft includes crimes previously classified as "Personal larceny without contact" and "Household larceny."

\*The preliminary difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

\*\*The preliminary difference is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

**Table 3. Victimization levels, 1992-95**

Year	Rape/ sexual assault	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Simple assault	Personal theft	Burglary	Theft	Motor vehicle theft
1992	607,310	1,271,830	2,316,690	6,052,840	369,130	5,802,760	24,579,360	1,834,570
1993	485,290	1,291,020	2,562,860	6,508,930	516,980	5,984,000	24,237,780	1,960,540
1994	432,700	1,298,590	2,477,940	6,650,470	488,930	5,482,300	23,764,900	1,763,540
1995*	354,670	1,123,720	2,010,370	6,382,580	402,590	4,848,350	22,883,060	1,603,980

\*Figures for 1995 are preliminary.

**Table 4. Victimization rates, 1992-95**

Year	Number of victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older					Number of victimizations per 1,000 households		
	Rape/ sexual assault	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Simple assault	Personal theft	Burglary	Theft	Motor vehicle theft
1992	2.9	6.1	11.1	28.9	1.8	58.6	248.2	18.5
1993	2.3	6.1	12.1	30.8	2.4	59.9	242.6	19.6
1994	2.0	6.1	11.6	31.1	2.3	54.4	235.7	17.5
1995*	1.6	5.2	9.3	29.6	1.9	47.7	224.9	15.8

\*Figures for 1995 are preliminary.

# Bureau of Justice Statistics Fact Sheet

## Where do the National Crime Victimization numbers come from?

These preliminary numbers are national estimates of crime in 1995, based on data collected in 1995 from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The final numbers will include information received in 1996 about crimes in 1995 and will show more detail regarding the nature of victimizations such as the victim's age, sex, race, and the relationship between offender and victim.

National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is the Nation's primary source of information on criminal victimization. Twice each year, data are obtained from a nationally representative sample of roughly 49,000 households comprising about 100,000 persons on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization in the United States.

The survey reports the likelihood of victimization by rape, sexual assault, robbery, assault, theft, household burglary, and motor vehicle theft for the population as a whole as well as for segments of the population such as women, the elderly, members of various racial groups, city dwellers, or other groups.

The NCVS provides the largest national forum for victims to describe the impact of crime and characteristics of violent offenders. Although the NCVS has been measuring crime since 1973, the redesigned and improved survey started reporting results in 1992.

## How do these numbers compare with the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)?

On May 5, 1996, the FBI released their preliminary 1995 estimate that violent crime (murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) fell 4% and property crime fell 1%

**Table A. Comparison of NCVS and UCR preliminary estimates**

The direction of change in the NCVS preliminary estimates for 1995 is largely consistent with the preliminary 1995 estimates from the UCR:

	1994-95 percent change		
	<u>NCVS</u>	<u>NCVS reported to police</u>	<u>UCR</u>
Violent crime, including simple assault	-9.1%	-5.7%	--
Rape, robbery, aggravated assault	-17.1%	-14.1%	-4%
Burglary	-11.6%	-6.3%	-5%
Theft	-3.7%	-1.9%	+1%
Motor vehicle theft	-9.0%	-12.3%	-6%

The NCVS and UCR percent change estimates do not correspond exactly because there are confidence intervals surrounding the survey's estimates.

NCVS: National Crime Victimization Survey from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)

UCR: Uniform Crime Reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

in 1995. The UCR measures crime reported to police, while the NCVS calculates "Reported to police," as presented in table A, based on interviews with the victims.

The FBI's UCR program, which began in 1929, collects information from monthly law enforcement reports or individual crime incident records transmitted directly to the FBI or to centralized State agencies that then report to the FBI. In 1994, law enforcement agencies active in the UCR Program represented approximately 249 million U.S. inhabitants — 96% of the total population.

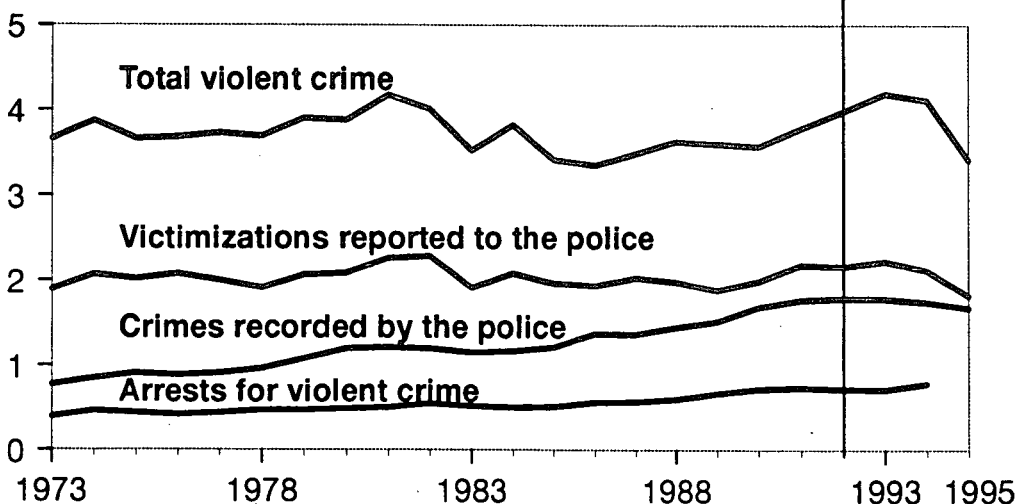
The UCR Program provides crime counts for the Nation as a whole, as well as for regions, States, counties, cities, and towns. This permits studies among neighboring jurisdictions and among those with similar populations and other common characteristics.

Each program has unique strengths. The UCR provides a measure of the number of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies throughout the country. The UCR's Supplemental Homicide Reports provide the most reliable, timely data on the extent and nature of homicides in the Nation. The NCVS is the primary source of information on the characteristics of criminal victimization and on the number and types of crimes not reported to law enforcement authorities.

The final NCVS estimates for 1994 reported in *Criminal Victimization 1994* (April 1996, NCJ-158022) and the press release describing them may be found at — <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs>

### Four measures of violent crime

Number of offenses  
Millions



Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics, The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)

Note: The violent crimes included are rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and homicide. The vertical line at 1992 indicates that because of changes made to the victimization survey, data prior to 1992 are adjusted to make them comparable to data collected under the redesigned methodology. Data for 1995 are preliminary estimates.