

Car crashes rank among the leading causes of death in the United States.



2009 Traffic Safety Culture Index

July, 2009



Abstract

In the past quarter of a century, the lives of over one million men, women, and children have ended violently as the result of motor vehicle crashes in the United States. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children, teens, and young adults up to age 34.¹ Statistics from the United States Department of Transportation indicate that 37,261 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2008.² Although this represents the fewest people killed in crashes in a single year since 1961, over a hundred lives are still being cut short day after day as the result of preventable accidents on our roads.

Since 2006, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety has been sponsoring research to better understand traffic safety culture.³ The AAA Foundation defines traffic safety culture as a social climate in which traffic safety is highly valued and rigorously pursued.⁴ In 2008, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety conducted the first annual *Traffic Safety Culture Index*,⁵ a nationally-representative telephone survey, to begin to assess a few key indicators of the degree to which traffic safety is valued and is being pursued, i.e., the prevailing traffic safety culture.

This Summary Report presents the top-line results of the AAA Foundation's second annual *Traffic Safety Culture Index*, a nationally-representative telephone survey of the American public.

Methods

The data reported here were collected in the AAA Foundation's second annual *Traffic Safety Culture Index*, a nationally-representative survey conducted by Abt SRBI Inc. for the AAA Foundation. The *Traffic Safety Culture Index* was a telephone survey of 2,501 U.S. residents 16 years of age and older, conducted in English and in Spanish, via landline and cellular telephone, from April 15, 2009 through May 12, 2009. The average interview length was 15.8 minutes.

The survey comprised two independent samples: a list-assisted random digit dial sample of landline telephone numbers, including both listed and unlisted numbers, as well as a random sample of cellular telephone numbers. The landline sample was stratified to oversample telephone exchanges in which the plurality of listed numbers is assigned to non-Metropolitan Statistical Area (rural) counties as classified by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Up to eight attempts were made to reach a household at each telephone number in the sample. If a household was reached, up to a total of fourteen attempts were made to complete an interview with the designated respondent. In the landline sample, one individual was selected randomly from among all of the household members who were at least 16 years old. This was accomplished by randomly requesting to interview either the household member who had the most recent birthday or the household member who would have the next birthday. In the cell phone sample, the person answering the phone was treated as the designated respondent, because cell phones are generally considered as individual devices rather than household devices. Interviewers confirmed that respondents were in a safe place to talk and were not driving, confirmed that they were at least 16 years old, and offered to help defray any cost that they might incur for the call.

The overall response rate for the combined landline and cell phone samples was 19.7% (AAPOR Response Rate 3),⁵ which represents the number of respondents with whom interviews were completed as a percentage of all eligible respondents in the sample. The cooperation rate was 54.1%, which represents the number of respondents with whom interviews were completed as a percentage of all eligible respondents who were actually contacted (AAPOR Cooperation Rate 3). The response rate and cooperation rate in the landline sample were 25.0% and 62.9%, respectively, and in the cell phone sample, they were 14.8% and 45.3%, respectively.

Data were weighted to adjust for unequal probability of selection and to correct for other sources of non-response bias. The landline sample was corrected for the oversampling of numbers in telephone exchanges classified as rural. The landline and cell phone samples were combined; and the landline-only, landline-and-cell-phone, and cell-phone-only segments were weighted using National Center for Health Statistics estimates of their relative population sizes. Then, the sample was weighted using U.S. Census Bureau estimates of the distribution of the population on the basis of age and gender, race and ethnicity, education, and marital status. The unweighted and weighted characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 19 in the Appendix.

The questionnaire contained several batteries in which several consecutive questions shared identical question structure and response format and dealt with similar issues (e.g., “How acceptable do you, personally, feel it is for a driver to [ITEM]?”). To reduce the burden that such batteries would pose to respondents, each respondent was asked only a subset of the questions. In the case of the previous example, all respondents were asked four specific items plus a randomly-selected three of the other six items, so that each of the latter six items would be asked of half of all respondents. With the sample size used in this survey, this resulted in all such items being asked of over 1,000 respondents, which provides adequate statistical precision for estimating overall national prevalence and for identifying large differences between subgroups.

The results reported here have a margin of error that varies according to whether data is being reported on the entire sample or some subset thereof, as well as the distribution of responses to each individual item. Due to the oversampling of respondents living in rural areas and the combination of landline and cellular calling frames, the margin of error in this survey is slightly larger than it would be in a simple random sample in which each eligible sampling unit had identical chance of being included in the sample. As an illustrative example, the margin of error of a proportion of around 50%, computed using the entire sample of drivers, would be approximately 2.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level in this survey, whereas it would be approximately 2.1 percentage points in a survey conducted using a simple random sample. For statistics based on only a subset of the whole sample, the margin of error is greater.

Note that the margin of error reflects only the level of confidence that the responses of a random sample of respondents are statistically representative of the responses that would have been obtained if the entire population were to have been interviewed over the same time period, by the same interviewers, using the same questionnaire. It does not reflect errors related to systematic non-coverage of certain segments of the population (e.g., people not reachable via residential landline or cellular telephone, or who speak neither English nor Spanish), non-response (i.e., eligible respondents who either cannot be contacted or refuse to participate), differences in respondents' understanding of survey questions or response options, or deliberate misreporting of information (e.g., under-reporting of behaviors that may be perceived as undesirable).

Note that respondents included non-drivers as well as drivers. For the purpose of this report, respondents who reported having not driven in the past 30 days are classified as non-drivers. Non-drivers were asked a subset of questions related to their attitudes toward traffic safety, but were not asked questions related to their driving behavior.

Also note that for the purpose of sampling and weighting, respondents in the landline sample were classified as urban or rural according to the U.S. Census Bureau classification of the county in which they live. However, this information is not available for respondents in the cell phone sample. Therefore, respondents in both samples were asked the question: “How would you describe the area where you live? Would you say your home is in the country, a small town, a medium-sized town, a small city, or a large city?” For the purpose of analysis, respondents who reported that they live “in the country” were classified as rural.

This report summarizes the top-line results of the survey; complete top-line results (excluding open-ended questions) are included in tables in the Appendix. Note that salient subgroup differences are noted in some places; however, exhaustive statistical analysis of the relationships between variables has not been performed. Commentary on subgroup differences (e.g., with respect to age) is generally limited to large obvious differences, and does not indicate that other significant relationships do not exist.

Results

Many Americans consider traffic safety a serious issue in at least some ways; however, it appears that traffic safety tends to lag behind many other issues and priorities.

- When asked whether driving feels safer, less safe, or about the same as it did five years ago, 34% of drivers say driving feels less safe today (Table 2). In an open-ended follow-up question, distracted driving—cited by 31% of these drivers—was the single most common reason given for feeling less safe today.
- Slightly over one in three Americans (36%) say that their local government is putting too little effort into making roads and highways safer (Table 1). While this suggests that at least some Americans consider the safety of roads to be an important issue that deserves more government attention, the safety of roads and highways ranked behind the education system, the environment, and traffic congestion in terms of the number of people who indicated that each issue was receiving too little attention. Of some note, drivers who indicated that driving feels less safe today than it did five years ago were substantially more likely to say that their local government was putting too little effort into making roads and highways safer (48% vs. 31%).

- Fewer than two out of five Americans (38%) expressed support for increasing the tax on gasoline by 10 cents per gallon to pay for improvements to the most dangerous roads in their state (Table 17). Notably, those who said that their local government was putting too little effort into making roads and highways safer were no more likely to support increasing the tax on gasoline to pay for road improvements than were those who said their local government was putting about the right amount of effort into making roads and highways safer.
- Two out of five drivers (40%) who have bought or leased a vehicle in the past 2 years report that they considered the vehicle's crash test ratings very strongly. However, larger percentages report having very strongly considered the vehicle's fuel efficiency (45%) and its handling and performance (59%), and nearly one in five (18%) say they didn't consider the vehicle's crash test ratings at all (Table 3).
- More than one in three drivers (34%) is not sure of whether or not the vehicle that they usually drive has electronic stability control—a technology that helps the driver maintain directional control of the vehicle under adverse conditions or during an emergency maneuver. Nine percent of drivers are not sure of whether or not their vehicle has anti-lock brakes; 7% are not sure of whether or not their vehicle has side air bags (Table 4).
- Three out of five drivers (60%) say that if they could get information about the chance of being injured in a crash on different roads in the areas where they drive, they would consider avoiding the most dangerous roads, even if those were also the most convenient roads for them (Table 5). Nearly three out of four (74%) say they would consider using this type of information to plan their route when driving in an unfamiliar area (Table 6).
- Nearly one in four Americans (23%) reports having been involved in a serious motor vehicle crash—defined in the survey as a crash in which someone had to go to the hospital—at some point in their lives; nearly one in eight (12%) reports having been seriously injured in a crash (Table 19).
- More than one in three Americans (37%) reports having had a friend or relative who was seriously injured or killed in a motor vehicle crash (Table 19). Nearly half (47%) of Americans report having been involved in a serious crash, having had a friend or relative seriously injured or killed in a crash, or both.
- Nearly half of all Americans (47%) say that they could think of a family member, friend, or other close acquaintance that sometimes drives in a way that they feel is unsafe (Table 14). Respondents who reported having been involved in a serious crash and/or having had a friend or relative who was seriously injured or killed in a crash were significantly more likely to report knowing someone whose driving they felt was unsafe (56% vs. 43%).

A large majority of drivers rate their driving skills and safety as above average.

Nearly two out of three drivers (65%) report that their driving skills are somewhat better or much better than those of most other drivers; fewer than two out of every hundred drivers believe and are willing to admit that their driving skills are somewhat or much worse than the driving skills of most other drivers (Table 7). Of some note, drivers under age 20 were significantly less likely than drivers ages 20-64 to rate their skills as better than average (57% vs. 68%). Drivers ages 75 and older were the least likely to rate their skills as better than average (43%).

- Three out of four drivers (75%) report that they are somewhat or much more careful than most other drivers; 2% report that they are somewhat or much less careful than most other drivers (Table 7). The proportion of drivers rating themselves as much more careful increased across the entire age spectrum, from 27% of drivers under age 20, to 45% of those ages 75 and older.
- Two out of three drivers (66%) report that they are somewhat or much safer than most other drivers; 3% report that they are somewhat or much less safe than most other drivers (Table 7). Drivers under age 20 and drivers ages 75 and older were least likely to rate themselves as safer than most other drivers—consistent with the increased crash involvement of these age groups as demonstrated in official crash statistics.

Drinking and driving is viewed as a very serious threat, social disapproval is almost universal and is acknowledged, and very few drivers admit drinking and driving.

- 12% of drivers report having driven after drinking alcohol in the past 30 days; 2% report having driven in the past 30 days when they thought their blood alcohol level might have been over the legal limit; 1% admit having driven in the past 30 days when they thought they might have consumed too much alcohol to be able to drive safely (Table 12).
 - Men were much more likely than women to report having driven after drinking any alcohol (17% vs. 7%), having driven when they thought their blood alcohol level might have been over the legal limit (3.5% vs. 0.9%), and having driven when they thought they might have consumed too much alcohol to be able to drive safely (1.6% vs. 0.2%) in the past 30 days.
- Nearly nine out of ten drivers (89%) say people driving after drinking alcohol are a very serious threat to their personal safety (Table 9).
- Nineteen out of twenty drivers (95%) say that they personally consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to drive when they think they may have had too much to drink (Table 16), and more than seven out of ten (72%) say that where they live, most people would also say that is completely unacceptable (Table 15).

Most people view drivers text messaging and emailing while driving as a very serious threat to their own personal safety and consider it completely unacceptable; but many drivers don't perceive this social disapproval from others, and a substantial minority admit texting or emailing while driving.

- More than one in five drivers (21%) admits having read or sent a text message or email while driving in the past 30 days (Table 10).
 - The proportion of drivers reporting having done this decreased with age across the entire age spectrum, from 51% of drivers ages 16-19, to 22% of drivers ages 35-44, and 3% of drivers ages 75 and older.
- Over four out of five drivers (82%) who admit texting or emailing while driving say this makes them somewhat or much more likely to be involved in a crash; fewer than one in twenty says that it doesn't make them any more likely to crash (Table 13).
- Nearly nine out of ten drivers (87%) say drivers text messaging or emailing are a very serious threat to their personal safety (Table 9).
- Four out of five drivers (81%) say that they personally consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to send text messages or emails (Table 16); however, only about half (52%) say that most people where they live consider it completely unacceptable (Table 15).

Cell phone use while driving has become widespread and people are generally accepting of hands-free cell phone use. There is a moderate level of social disapproval toward using a hand-held cell phone while driving, but most people don't perceive the social disapproval of using a hand-held cell phone while driving as being widespread or strong.

- Two out of three drivers (67%) report having talked on their cell phone while driving in the past 30 days, including 28% who report talking on their cell phone while driving fairly often or regularly (Table 10).
 - The proportion of drivers reporting cell phone use while driving was highest among drivers ages 20-44: nearly four out of five (78%) report talking on cell phones while driving, including over two of five (41%) who report doing this fairly often or regularly.
 - Men were slightly more likely than women to report fairly often or regularly using a cell phone while driving (31% vs. 26%).
 - Respondents possessing a bachelor's degree or higher level of education were significantly more likely than respondents not possessing a bachelor's degree to report fairly often or regularly using a cell phone while driving (36% vs. 25%).
- About half of drivers (48%) who report talking on a cell phone while driving say that they feel it makes them somewhat or much more likely to be involved in a crash; 16% say it does not make them any more likely to crash (Table 13).
- Three out of five drivers (58%) of drivers say drivers talking on cell phones are a very serious threat to their personal safety (Table 9).

- Fewer than half of drivers (46%) say that they consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to talk on a hand-held cell phone (Table 16), and only one in four (26%) thinks that most other people where they live consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to talk on a hand-held cell phone (Table 15).
- More than three out of five drivers (61%) say that they consider it somewhat or completely *acceptable* for a driver to talk on a hands-free cell phone (Table 16), and more than seven out of ten (71%) say that most other people where they live consider it acceptable for a driver to talk on a hands-free cell phone (Table 15).

A substantial minority of drivers reports driving 15 mph over the speed limit on freeways—some fairly often or regularly—and the majority does not perceive social disapproval.

- 44% of drivers report having driven 15 mph over the speed limit on a freeway at least once in the past 30 days; 15% say they do this fairly often or regularly (Table 10).
 - Drivers ages 25-44 are most likely to report having driven 15 mph over the speed limit on the freeway at least once (52%) and fairly often or regularly (22%).
 - Men were more likely than women to report driving 15 mph over the speed limit on a freeway fairly often or regularly (19% vs. 12%).
 - Drivers living in cities or towns were more likely than those living in rural areas to report driving 15 mph over the speed limit on a freeway fairly often or regularly (17% vs. 9%).
- 55% of drivers say people driving well over the speed limit are a very serious threat to their personal safety (Table 9).
- Two out of five drivers (39%) say that they personally consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to drive 15 mph over the speed limit on a freeway; however, nearly the same number of drivers (37%) says this is somewhat or completely acceptable (Table 16). More than half of all drivers (51%) say that most other people where they live consider driving 15 mph over the speed limit on freeways acceptable (Table 15).

In contrast to speeding on freeways, driving 15 mph over the speed limit on residential streets is much less common, almost universally viewed as unacceptable, and is widely perceived as being disapproved of by most other people.

- One in four drivers (24%) report having driven 15 mph over the speed limit on a residential street at least once in the past 30 days. Of these, most report having done this rarely or just once; only 17% of these drivers (4% of all drivers) report driving 15 mph over the speed limit on residential streets fairly often or regularly (Table 10).

- Drivers under age 25 were significantly more likely than drivers ages 25 or older to report having driven 15 mph over the speed limit on a residential street in the past 30 days (33% vs. 23%).
- Drivers in the Northeast region were more likely than those in other regions to report having driven 15 mph over the speed limit on a residential street (31% vs. 23%).
- In contrast to speeding on freeways, more than four out of five drivers (81%) say that they personally consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to drive 15 mph over the speed limit on a residential street (Table 16)—the same as the number who say it is completely unacceptable to send text messages or emails while driving—and three out of five (60%) think that most other people where they live would consider this behavior completely unacceptable (Table 15).

Most view driving aggressively as a very serious threat to their personal safety and view specific aggressive driving behaviors as unacceptable; however, a substantial minority of drivers admit to performing at least some aggressive behaviors.

Speeding

- 15% of drivers report that they usually drive somewhat or much faster than most other drivers on the road with them (Table 7).
 - The proportion of drivers reporting that they usually drive faster than most others on the road with them decreased with age, from over one in four drivers under age 25 (26%) to about one five drivers ages 25-44 (19%), one in ten ages 45-64 (9%), and fewer than one in twenty of those ages 75 and older (3%).
 - Men were somewhat more likely than women to report usually driving faster than most other drivers on the road with them (18% vs. 11%).
 - Drivers residing in towns or cities were more likely than rural drivers to report usually driving faster than most other drivers (16% vs. 10%).

Red-light Running

- 29% of drivers report having driven through a red light when they could have stopped safely in the past month; most said they did this rarely or only once (Table 10).
 - Drivers residing in towns or cities were more likely than rural drivers to report having run a red light in the past 30 days (31% vs. 23%).
 - Men were slightly more likely than women to report having run a red light in the past 30 days (32% vs. 27%).
- More than three out of four drivers (77%) say that they personally consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to drive through a red light when they could have stopped safely (Table 16), and over half (52%) think that most other people where they live would consider this completely unacceptable (Table 15).

Tailgating

- 27% of drivers report having tailgated another driver when they could have backed off in the past month; most said they did this rarely or only once (Table 10).
 - 41% of drivers ages 20-24 and 38% of drivers ages 25-34 reported having tailgated another driver in the past month; the percentage decreased with age.
 - Men were slightly more likely than women to report having tailgated another driver (30% vs. 25%).
 - Drivers of Hispanic origin were significantly more likely than non-Hispanic drivers to report tailgating fairly often or regularly (13% vs. 3%). Hispanics were as likely as or less likely than non-Hispanics to report all of the other unsafe driving behaviors investigated in this survey.
- Seven out of ten drivers say that they personally consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to tailgate a slow driver if there's no room to pass (Table 16); four out of ten think that most other people where they live consider this completely unacceptable (Table 15).

A substantial minority of drivers reports having driven while feeling very sleepy, though most consider this unacceptable and perceive at least some degree of social disapproval.

- 35% of drivers report having driven while feeling very sleepy at least once in the past 30 days; 5% say they do this fairly often or regularly (Table 10).
 - Drivers ages 20-34 were most likely to report having driven while very sleepy at all (41%) and fairly often or regularly (9%) in the past 30 days.
 - Men were more likely than women to report having driven while feeling very sleepy in the past month (39% vs. 31%).
- 71% of drivers say people driving when they're too sleepy are a very serious threat to their personal safety (Table 9).
- Three out of five drivers say that they personally consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to drive while feeling very sleepy (Table 16). Nearly half (45%) say that most other people where they live would consider this completely unacceptable (Table 15).

Most drivers report never driving without wearing their seatbelt and view it as unacceptable for a driver to drive without wearing a seatbelt, but perceptions of social disapproval from others are mixed.

- More than one out of five drivers (22%) report having driven without wearing their seatbelt in the past 30 days; nearly one out of ten (9%) reports doing this fairly often or regularly (Table 10).

- Men were significantly more likely than women to report ever driving without wearing their seatbelt (27% vs. 18%), and to report doing so fairly often or regularly (12% vs. 6%).
- Respondents with no education beyond high school were significantly more likely than respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education to report driving without wearing their seatbelt (27% vs. 17%). Respondents with lower levels of education were as likely as or less likely than respondents with higher levels of education to report most other unsafe behaviors investigated in this survey.
- African American respondents were more likely than respondents of other races to report driving without wearing their seatbelt (33% vs. 21%). African American respondents were not more likely than respondents of other races to report any of the other unsafe behaviors investigated in this survey.
- Nearly three out of four drivers say that they personally consider it completely unacceptable for a driver to drive without wearing their seatbelt (Table 16); almost half say that most other people where they live would consider this completely unacceptable (Table 15).

There is broad support for a variety of measures to improve traffic safety (Table 17).

- Nearly nine out of ten Americans (88%) support requiring drivers who have been convicted of DWI to use a device that won't let their car start if they have been drinking. Support was nearly as high among drivers who reported driving after drinking alcohol in the past month (87%) as among those who did not (90%).
- Nearly eight out of ten Americans (79%) support requiring all cars to be equipped with a device that won't let the car start if the driver is drunk. Not surprisingly, support for this was significantly lower among respondents who reported driving after drinking in the past month (62%) than among those who did not (80%); however, it is noteworthy that a majority of even those who admit driving after drinking support requiring such technology in vehicles.
- Over seven out of ten Americans (73%) support having alcohol checkpoints in which police officers test all drivers who come through a certain place several times every month in their community. Support for this was significantly lower among those who reported having driven after drinking in the past month (57%) than among those who did not (75%); however, again, a majority of even those who admit driving after drinking support having alcohol checkpoints in their community.
- Over eight out of ten Americans (84%) support requiring everyone in a vehicle to wear a seatbelt, even in the back seat. Support was significantly higher among drivers who report never driving without wearing their seatbelt (88%) than among those who report having driven without wearing their seatbelt in the past month (69%); however, more than two out of three drivers who report at least occasionally not wearing their seatbelt while driving still support this.

- Over eight out of ten Americans (84%) support requiring all motorcycle riders to wear a helmet. Support was lower among those who reported having ridden a motorcycle in the past year (63%) than among those who did not (85%); however, nearly two out of three motorcyclists support this.
- Two out of three Americans support using cameras to ticket drivers who run red lights (68%). Notably, levels of support were similar among drivers who reported having run a red light in the past month (64%) and among those who did not (68%).
- Two out of three Americans support using cameras to ticket drivers who speed on residential streets (68%). Support was significantly lower among drivers who reported having driven 15 mph over the speed limit on a residential street in the past month (57%) than among those who did not (70%).
- Support for using cameras to ticket speeding drivers on freeways was significantly lower (58%) than for using cameras to ticket speeding drivers on residential streets (68%) or for using cameras to ticket drivers who run red lights (68%). Support was much lower among drivers who reported exceeding the speed limit by 15 mph on freeways in the past month (44%) than among those who did not (64%).
- Slightly over half of Americans (54%) support raising the age for getting a driver's license to 18. Not surprisingly support was lowest among the youngest respondents—two out of three respondents ages 18 and under opposed this—however, support rose quickly with age beyond 18. For example, fully half of respondents ages 20-24 support raising the licensing age to 18, only slightly lower than support among adults ages 25 and older (56%).
- Almost half of Americans (46%) support having a law against using any type of cell phone while driving, hand-held or hands-free, for all drivers regardless of their age. Not surprisingly, support was highest among drivers who report never using a cell phone while driving (63%) and almost nonexistent among those who report regularly talking on their cell phone while driving (16%).

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Appendix: Data Tables

Table 1. Is your local government putting too much effort into _____, too little, or about the right amount?

	Too Little	About Right	Too Much	Don't Know / Refused	N
<i>Improving the education system</i>	54.9%	34.6%	5.2%	5.3%	1,264
<i>Protecting the environment</i>	42.2%	43.9%	8.0%	5.9%	1,278
<i>Law enforcement</i>	26.3%	58.6%	9.9%	5.2%	1,233
<i>Reducing traffic congestion</i>	40.4%	48.9%	3.4%	7.3%	1,227
<i>Making driving safer</i>	26.9%	60.4%	6.0%	6.6%	1,245
<i>Making roads and highways safer</i>	36.0%	55.9%	2.8%	5.3%	1,256

Base: All respondents

Table 2. Overall, do you think driving feels safer, less safe, or about the same as it did five years ago?

Safer	11.6%
About the Same	51.4%
Less Safe	34.0%
Don't Know / Refused	3.0%
Total Responses	2,141

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 3. Last time you bought or leased a vehicle, how strongly did you consider its _____?

	Very Strongly	Somewhat Strongly	Not Very Strongly	Not at All	Don't Know / Refused	N
<i>Fuel economy</i>	44.6%	30.8%	13.4%	8.7%	2.5%	871
<i>Crash test ratings</i>	40.5%	27.9%	9.6%	18.2%	3.8%	871
<i>Handling and performance</i>	59.0%	30.0%	5.6%	4.6%	0.8%	871

Base: Respondents who reported having bought or leased a vehicle in the past 2 years.

Table 4. Does [the vehicle that you drive most often] have _____?

	Yes	No	Yes (Not Sure)*	No (Not Sure)*	Don't Know	Refused	N
<i>Antilock brakes</i>	84.7%	5.7%	3.1%	1.0%	5.1%	0.4%	2,133
<i>Side airbags</i>	46.7%	45.6%	1.6%	2.4%	3.3%	0.4%	2,133
<i>Electronic Stability Control</i>	40.9%	24.9%	5.3%	4.5%	24.0%	0.4%	2,133

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in the past 30 days and that the vehicle that they drive most often is a car, truck, SUV, van, or minivan.

*The object of this question was to investigate drivers' knowledge regarding whether or not their vehicles have these technologies; thus, interviewers coded clear expressions of uncertainty (e.g., "I think so" or "I don't think so") separately from direct affirmative or negative responses.

Table 5. If you could get information about the chances of being injured in a crash on different roads in the areas where you drive, would you consider avoiding the most dangerous roads, even if they were the most convenient roads for you?

Yes	59.8%
No	37.3%
Don't Know / Refused	2.9%
N	2,141

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 6. Would you consider using this type of information to plan what roads you would take when driving in an area where you had never driven before?

Yes	73.8%
No	22.9%
Don't Know / Refused	3.3%
N	2,141

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 7. Compared to most other drivers, do you think you/your:

- **driving skills are much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse?**
- **much more careful, somewhat more careful, about as careful, somewhat less careful, or much less careful?**
- **much safer, somewhat safer, about as safe, somewhat less safe, or much less safe?**
- **usually drive much faster, somewhat faster, about the same, somewhat slower, or much slower?**

	Much: Better More Careful Safer Faster	Somewhat Better More Careful Safer Faster	About the Same	Somewhat Worse Less Careful Less Safe Slower	Much: Worse Less Careful Less Safe Slower	Don't Know / Refused	N
Skills	27.8%	36.9%	32.6%	1.5%	0.2%	0.9%	2,141
Careful	39.8%	34.7%	22.5%	1.3%	1.0%	0.8%	2,141
Safe	35.1%	31.0%	30.2%	2.0%	1.1%	0.5%	2,141
Speed	1.8%	13.0%	56.3%	23.4%	2.3%	3.2%	2,141

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 8. Thinking about everything that can cause a car accident, how much of it do you think is under your control? Would you say all, most, some, a little bit, or none of it?

All	6.1%
Most	38.6%
Some	42.0%
A little bit	8.6%
None	3.6%
Don't Know / Refused	1.1%
N	2,141

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 9. Do you feel ____ are a very serious threat, a somewhat serious threat, a minor threat, or not a threat to your personal safety?

	Very Serious Threat	Somewhat Serious Threat	Minor Threat	Not a Threat	Don't Know / Refused	N
<i>People driving well over the speed limit</i>	55.2%	33.8%	8.5%	1.7%	0.7%	2,141
<i>People driving aggressively</i>	69.7%	25.5%	3.6%	0.8%	0.4%	2,141
<i>Drivers talking on cell phones</i>	57.5%	33.4%	7.2%	1.2%	0.6%	2,141
<i>Drivers not paying attention</i>	79.4%	17.8%	1.9%	0.9%	0.0%	1,030
<i>People driving after drinking alcohol</i>	89.2%	7.6%	2.7%	0.1%	0.4%	1,097
<i>People driving when they're too sleepy</i>	71.1%	23.0%	4.4%	0.5%	1.0%	1,088
<i>Drivers text messaging or emailing</i>	86.7%	10.1%	1.8%	0.5%	0.9%	1,067

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 10. In the past 30 days, how often have you ____? Have you done that regularly, fairly often, rarely, just once, or never?

	Never	Just Once	Rarely	Fairly Often	Regularly	Don't Know / Refused	N
<i>Driven without wearing your seatbelt</i>	77.3%	3.6%	9.6%	3.7%	5.4%	0.4%	2,141
<i>Allowed other people to ride in your car without wearing their seatbelt</i>	79.0%	2.0%	11.4%	3.4%	3.2%	1.1%	2,141
<i>Driven 15 miles per hour over the speed limit on a freeway</i>	55.8%	5.1%	23.3%	8.9%	6.2%	0.7%	2,141
<i>Driven 15 miles per hour over the speed limit on a residential street</i>	75.6%	4.4%	15.4%	2.8%	1.3%	0.5%	2,141
<i>Tailgated another driver when you could have backed off</i>	72.0%	5.9%	17.0%	2.7%	1.7%	0.7%	2,141
<i>Driven through a light that had just turned red, when you could have stopped safely</i>	70.4%	10.5%	16.0%	1.8%	0.9%	0.3%	2,141
<i>Driven when you were feeling very sleepy</i>	65.2%	9.2%	20.5%	2.8%	2.0%	0.2%	2,141
<i>Talked on your cell phone while you were driving</i>	32.4%	8.8%	30.0%	15.8%	12.3%	0.8%	2,141
<i>Read or sent a text message or email while you were driving</i>	78.6%	4.2%	10.5%	4.2%	2.0%	0.5%	2,141

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 11. When you talk on your cell phone while you're driving, do you usually hold the phone in your hand, or is it hands-free?

Hand-held	54.3%
Hands-free	41.8%
Both (VOL)	3.8%
Don't Know / Refused	0.1%
N	1,434

Base = respondents who reported talking on cell phone while driving in past 30 days.

Table 12. In the past 30 days, have you ____ ?

	Yes	No	Don't Know / Refused	N
Driven when you thought your alcohol level might have been over the legal limit? ¹	2.2%	97.5%	0.4%	2,141
Driven after you had been drinking alcohol? ²	12.0%	87.6%	0.4%	2,141
Driven when you thought you might have had too much alcohol to drive safely? ³	0.9%	98.7%	0.5%	2,141

1. Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

2. Base : Respondents who reported driving in past 30 days. Respondents who responded affirmatively to previous item (n=43) were not asked this item and were automatically coded as Yes. Respondents who volunteered that they do not drink at all when asked previous item (n=362) were not asked this item and were automatically coded as No.

3. Base: Respondents who reported having driven after drinking alcohol in past 30 days. Respondents who reported not driving after drinking alcohol in past 30 days (n=1,865) were not asked this item and were automatically coded as No.

Table 13. When you ____, do you feel that makes you much more likely to have an accident, somewhat more likely, a little more likely, or no more likely?

	Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	A Little More Likely	No More Likely	Don't Know / Refused	N
Drive 15 mph over the speed limit on the freeway	13.4%	30.1%	30.1%	23.9%	2.5%	916
Drive 15 mph over the speed limit on a residential street	29.4%	33.0%	22.9%	12.1%	2.6%	510
Talk on your cell phone while you're driving	14.7%	33.4%	35.0%	16.2%	0.7%	1,434
Read or send a text message or email while you're driving	54.9%	27.1%	12.2%	4.7%	1.0%	434
Drive while you're feeling very sleepy	36.9%	39.0%	17.5%	4.8%	1.9%	764

Base: Respondents who reported having performed the behavior in the past 30 days.

Table 14. Thinking about the people who you know well, like your friends or members of your family, can you think of anyone who sometimes drives in a way that you feel is unsafe?

Yes	47.4%
No	51.2%
Don't Know / Refused	1.4%
Total Responses	2,501

Base = All respondents.

Table 15. Where you live, would MOST PEOPLE say it's completely acceptable, somewhat acceptable, somewhat unacceptable, or completely unacceptable for a driver to ____ ?

	Completely Unacceptable	Somewhat Unacceptable	Neither (VOL)	Somewhat Acceptable	Completely Acceptable	Don't Know / Refused	N
<i>Drive without wearing their seatbelt</i>	48.1%	23.5%	0.4%	18.4%	5.4%	4.3%	1,062
<i>Drive 15 miles per hour over the speed limit on a freeway</i>	22.2%	22.2%	0.2%	38.6%	12.8%	4.0%	2,141
<i>Drive 15 miles per hour over the speed limit on a residential street</i>	60.0%	20.7%	0.2%	13.2%	3.5%	2.4%	2,141
<i>Tailgate a slow driver if there is not room to pass</i>	42.0%	26.3%	0.3%	22.8%	5.2%	3.3%	1,120
<i>Drive through a light that had just turned red, when they could have stopped safely</i>	51.9%	25.1%	0.2%	15.4%	4.0%	3.4%	1,108
<i>Drive while feeling very sleepy</i>	44.6%	31.3%	0.6%	15.3%	1.4%	6.8%	1,041
<i>Talk on a hands-free cell phone while driving</i>	12.8%	11.9%	0.6%	39.4%	31.4%	3.9%	2,141
<i>Talk on a hand-held cell phone while driving</i>	25.5%	25.5%	0.2%	32.7%	13.0%	3.1%	2,141
<i>Send text messages or emails while driving</i>	52.0%	20.1%	0.2%	18.3%	3.9%	5.5%	1,034
<i>Drive when they think they may have had too much to drink</i>	71.5%	12.3%	0.0%	11.3%	1.8%	3.0%	1,058

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 16. How acceptable do YOU, PERSONALLY, consider it to be for a driver to _____ ?

	Completely Unacceptable	Somewhat Unacceptable	Neither (VOL)	Somewhat Acceptable	Completely Acceptable	Don't Know / Refused	N
<i>Drive without wearing their seatbelt</i>	72.6%	13.4%	0.3%	7.7%	4.8%	1.2%	1,062
<i>Drive 15 miles per hour over the speed limit on a freeway</i>	39.2%	22.8%	0.3%	30.3%	6.5%	0.9%	2,141
<i>Drive 15 miles per hour over the speed limit on a residential street</i>	81.1%	13.1%	0.2%	4.4%	1.0%	0.3%	2,141
<i>Tailgate a slow driver if there is not room to pass</i>	70.2%	20.1%	0.0%	7.3%	1.5%	1.0%	1,120
<i>Drive through a light that had just turned red, when they could have stopped safely</i>	76.8%	16.7%	0.0%	5.2%	1.1%	0.2%	1,108
<i>Drive while feeling very sleepy</i>	60.3%	29.4%	0.2%	8.7%	0.8%	0.5%	1,041
<i>Talk on a hands-free cell phone while driving</i>	20.2%	17.3%	0.3%	36.5%	24.1%	1.6%	2,141
<i>Talk on a hand-held cell phone while driving</i>	45.7%	24.7%	0.2%	24.7%	3.8%	0.9%	2,141
<i>Send text messages or emails while driving</i>	81.1%	13.0%	0.0%	4.9%	0.4%	0.6%	1,034
<i>Drive when they think they may have had too much to drink</i>	94.7%	3.8%	0.1%	0.5%	0.6%	0.3%	1,058

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

Table 17. Do you support or oppose _____ ?

	Support	Neither (VOL)	Oppose	Don't Know / Refused	N
<i>Requiring everyone in a vehicle to wear seatbelts, even in the back seat</i>	84.4%	1.2%	13.4%	0.9%	2,501
<i>Requiring all motorcycle riders to wear a helmet</i>	84.2%	1.5%	13.4%	1.0%	1,502
<i>Using cameras to ticket speeding drivers on freeways</i>	57.8%	1.9%	37.9%	2.4%	2,501
<i>Using cameras to ticket speeding drivers on residential streets</i>	67.8%	1.2%	29.1%	1.9%	2,501
<i>Using cameras to ticket drivers who run red lights</i>	67.8%	1.2%	28.9%	2.1%	1,534
<i>Having a law against using any type of cell phone while driving, handheld or hands free, for all drivers regardless of their age</i>	46.3%	2.1%	49.2%	2.4%	2,501
<i>Having alcohol checkpoints, where police officers test all drivers who come through a certain place, several times every month in your community</i>	72.8%	1.7%	23.6%	1.9%	1,471
<i>Requiring drivers who have been convicted of DWI to use a device that won't let their car start if they have been drinking</i>	88.3%	1.2%	8.9%	1.6%	1,499
<i>Requiring all cars to be equipped with a device that won't let the car start if the driver is drunk</i>	78.8%	1.1%	18.8%	1.3%	2,501
<i>Raising the minimum age for getting a driver's license to 18</i>	53.9%	2.6%	40.4%	3.2%	1,497
<i>Adding 10 cents per gallon to the tax on gasoline to pay for improvements to the most dangerous roads in the state</i>	37.7%	2.7%	56.1%	3.5%	2,501

Base: All respondents.

**Table 18. Driver Characteristics
(Unweighted N and Weighted Percent)**

Number of Days Driven in Past 7 Days	N	Weighted
0	33	1.7%
1	60	2.9%
2	105	4.8%
3	139	6.6%
4	105	4.6%
5	177	8.6%
6	153	7.1%
7	1,355	62.9%
Don't Know / Refused	14	0.8%
Type of Vehicle Driven Most Often	N	Weighted
Car (Includes Station Wagon)	1,163	52.3%
Van / Minivan	222	10.9%
Pickup Truck	309	16.2%
Sport Utility Vehicle	399	18.4%
Other	39	1.8%
Don't Know / Refused	9	0.5%
Ridden Motorcycle in Past 12 Months	N	Weighted
Yes	196	9.4%
No	1,936	90.1%
Don't Know / Refused	9	0.4%
Stopped by Police for Moving Violation in Past 2 Years	N	Weighted
Yes	413	19.3%
No	1,717	80.3%
Don't Know / Refused	11	0.4%
Tickets for Moving Violations in Past 2 Years	N	Weighted
0	1,856	86.5%
1	217	10.2%
2+	57	2.9%
Don't Know / Refused	11	0.4%
Accidents while Driving in Past 2 Years	N	Weighted
0	1,900	88.4%
1	192	9.2%
2+	39	1.8%
Don't Know / Refused	10	0.5%

Base: Respondents who reported having driven in past 30 days.

**Table 19. Sample Characteristics
(Unweighted N and Weighted Percent)**

Age Group	N	Weighted
16-19	167	8.8%
20-24	173	6.3%
25-34	372	16.8%
35-44	335	18.3%
45-54	497	18.4%
55-64	431	13.7%
65-74	269	8.0%
75+	194	7.3%
Not Ascertained	63	2.5%
Gender	N	Weighted
Male	1,106	47.9%
Female	1,395	52.1%
Education	N	Weighted
Not High School Graduate	297	18.3%
High School Graduate	652	28.8%
Some College / Associate's Degree	697	27.2%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	815	24.1%
Not Ascertained	40	1.6%
Marital Status	N	Weighted
Never Married	648	27.6%
Married	1,301	52.0%
Widowed	209	6.9%
Separated / Divorced	306	11.9%
Not Ascertained	37	1.5%
Race and Ethnicity	N	Weighted
Non-Hispanic White	1,796	68.2%
Non-Hispanic Black	226	11.0%
Hispanic (Any Race)	253	12.8%
All Other Races	188	6.4%
Not Ascertained	38	1.5%
Language of Interview	N	Weighted
English	2,385	93.3%
Spanish	116	6.7%
Type of Community	N	Weighted
Country	484	18.7%
Small Town	619	23.6%
Medium-Sized Town	389	16.6%
Small City	509	20.3%
Large City	436	18.1%
Not Ascertained	64	2.7%

Base: All Respondents

Table 19. Sample Characteristics (Continued)
(Unweighted N and Weighted Percent)

Region	N	%
Northeast	455	18.2%
Midwest	626	22.7%
South	870	36.0%
West	550	23.1%
Last Time Driving	N	%
Within Past 30 Days	2,141	83.9%
Within Past 6 Months	92	4.4%
6 Months - 1 Year Ago	40	1.7%
More than 1 Year Ago	124	4.9%
Has Never Driven	103	5.1%
Don't Know / Refused	1	0.0%
Has Valid Driver's License	N	%
Yes	2,190	85.0%
No	297	14.5%
Don't Know / Refused	14	0.5%
Ever Involved in Serious Motor Vehicle Accident	N	%
Yes	573	23.0%
No	1,918	76.6%
Don't Know / Refused	10	0.4%
Ever Seriously Injured in Motor Vehicle Accident	N	%
Yes	310	12.1%
No	2,180	87.6%
Don't Know / Refused	11	0.4%
Friend or Relative Ever Seriously Injured or Killed in Motor Vehicle Accident	N	%
Yes	932	37.3%
No	1,557	62.2%
Don't Know / Refused	12	0.5%

Base: All Respondents