



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**



Traffic Tech

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER SERIES

DOT HS 813 595

December 2024

2022-2023 National Survey of Speeding Attitudes and Behaviors

Background

For more than 20 years speeding has been involved in about one-third of all motor vehicle fatalities (NCSA, 2014, 2023). Even as new vehicle technologies improve driver and passenger safety, a driver's propensity to drive too fast for the road conditions or more than the speed limit often has tragic consequences. The 2022-2023 National Survey of Speeding Attitudes and Behavior is the fourth in a series of surveys conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that focus on speeding and yield national estimates of driver behavior and attitudes toward speeding in the United States.

Methodology

To address declining survey response rates for telephone surveys and the need to ensure better coverage and representativeness of the sample, the 2022 to 2023 survey was transitioned from a random-digit-dialing approach to an address-based sampling design that used a mail-push-to-web approach to encourage respondents to complete the survey either online or by mail. Respondents were randomly selected household members 18 and older.

Survey data was collected from 5,680 respondents via web and mail surveys from September 28, 2022, to January 22, 2023. This data was weighted to yield national estimates and to support inferences about the national driver population. Analyses included in the full report include driver characteristics, comparisons of key variables across population subgroups such as sex or age groupings, comparisons across speeder types, and trend analysis of key variables across four iterations of the speeding behaviors survey. The survey questionnaire and a full description of the survey methodology are in the appendices in the full report.

Results

Of the 5,680 respondents, 5,593 reported driving at least during certain times of the year. Those who responded to the survey and indicated they never drive are not included in analyses. Of the 5,593 drivers, 1,930 (35%) completed the survey by mail and 3,663 (65%) completed by web. Almost three-quarters of the full sample (73%) reported driving every day, or almost every day, and almost half (46%) reported their primary vehicles as cars, followed by 36% reporting they drive SUVs.

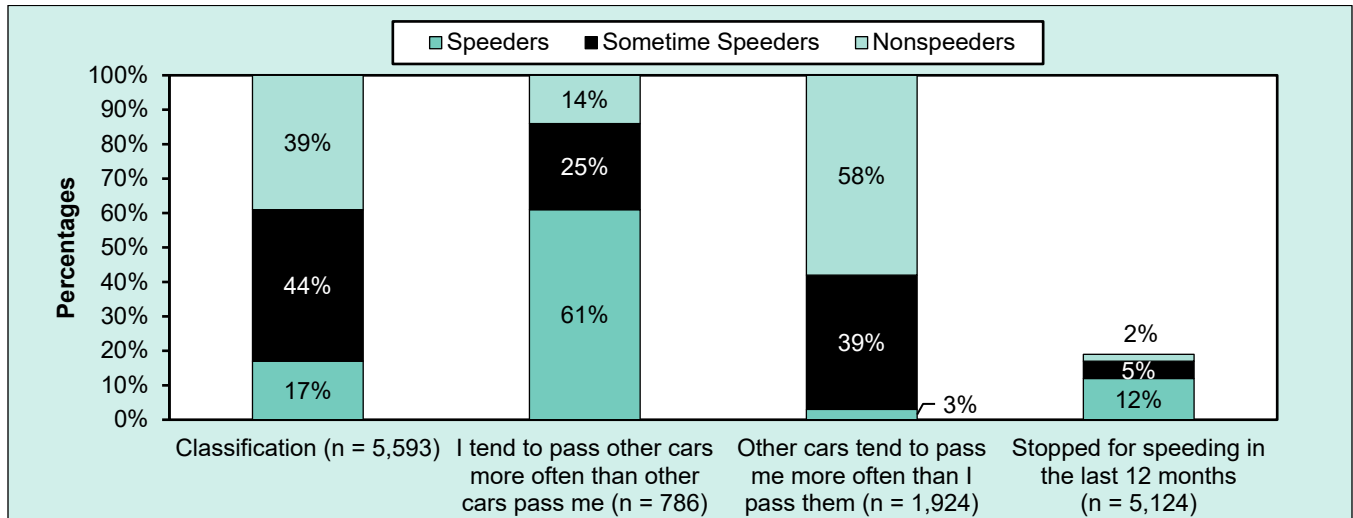
Driver Types

Respondents were grouped into one of three latent categories based on responses to six questions about speeding-related behaviors and attitudes. Respondents were classified as either speeders, sometime speeders, or nonspeeders. The largest category was sometime speeders, representing 44% of the population, followed by nonspeeders, representing 39% of the population, and speeders being the smallest group at 17% of the population. Driver type can be a predictor of norms and attitudes toward speeding behavior and relevant countermeasures as well as crash experience and past sanctions.

The driver types exhibit differences in respondent speeding-related behaviors and attitudes. Of those who indicated that they tend to pass other cars more often than other cars pass them, over half (61%) were speeders, compared to 25% who were sometime speeders and 14% who were nonspeeders. Of those who reported that they tend to be passed by other cars, over half (58%) were nonspeeders, compared to only 3% who were speeders. Similarly, of those who reported that they tend to keep up with faster traffic, more were speeders (38%) than nonspeeders (21%). Of those who tended to stay with slower-moving traffic, over half (62%) were nonspeeders, compared to only 3% who were speeders.

While most respondents had not been stopped for speeding in the past 12 months, more speeders (12%) reported being stopped once in the past 12 months compared to nonspeeders (2%) and sometime speeders (5%).

Figure 1. Driver Type and Driving Tendencies



The driver types also differed in certain demographic characteristics. Examining the distribution of driver types by respondent sex indicated that the percentage of sometime speeders was the same among males and females (44%). More females (42%) were classified as nonspeeders than males (38%), and more males (18%) were classified as speeders than females (14%). Examining respondent income showed that as income level rose the percentage of respondents classified as speeders also increased.

Norms and Attitudes About Speeding

Respondents broadly showed consistency in their normative and personal attitudes toward speeding.

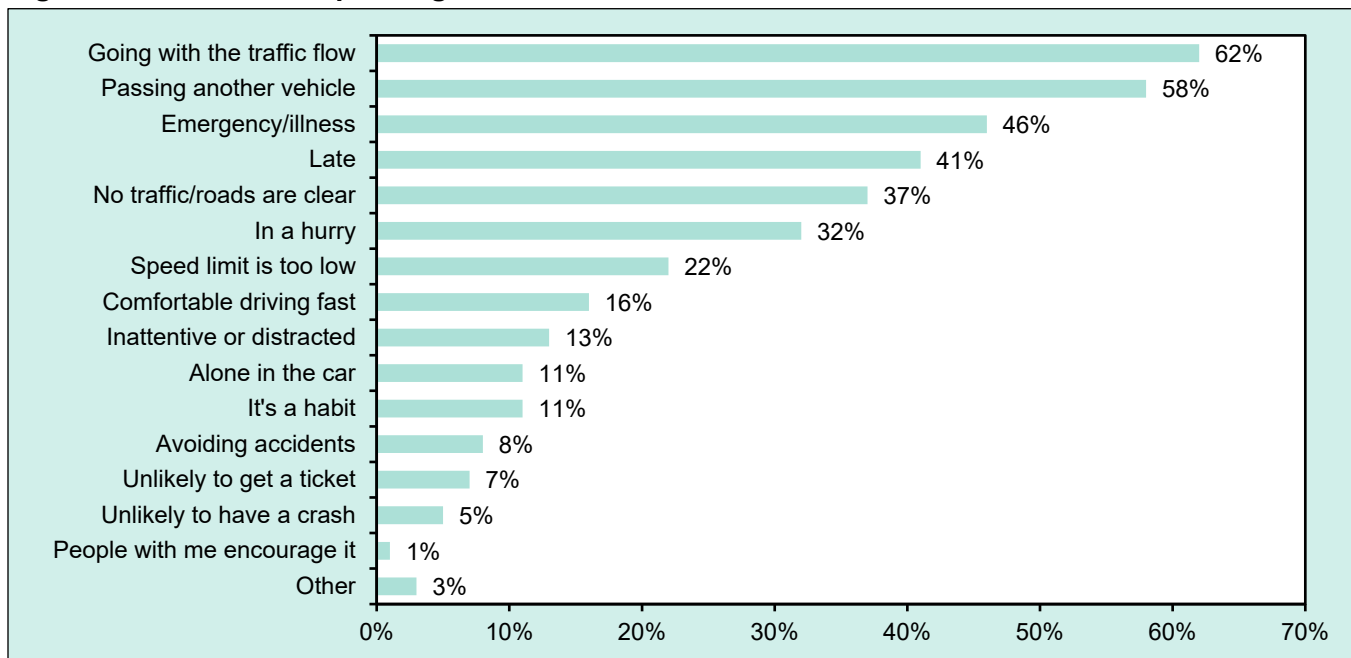
Normative Attitudes. Almost all respondents (91%) agreed or strongly agreed that people should keep pace with the flow of traffic. Most respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that everyone should obey the speed limit because it’s the law (87%) and that it is unacceptable to exceed the speed limit by more than 20 mph (85%). Normative attitudes toward speeding differed by driver types. More speeders (65%) strongly agreed with the statement that people should keep pace with the flow of traffic, compared to sometime speeders (46%) and nonspeeders (40%). Also, speeders were more than twice as likely as nonspeeders to strongly agree that speeding tickets were given out more for raising money than reducing speeding (35% versus 14%).

Personal Attitudes. Almost two-thirds of respondents (62%) agreed or strongly agreed that they often get impatient with slower drivers, and only about half (48%) agreed or strongly agreed that they worry a lot about having a crash. Agreement was notably lower for respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements “Driving within or near the speed limit makes me feel bored” (10%) and “I consider myself a risk taker while driving” (7%).

Driving the Speed Limit. Almost three-quarters of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that driving at or near the speed limit reduces their chances of an accident (72%) and that it makes it easier to avoid dangerous situations (70%). More than half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that driving at or near the speed limit uses less fuel (58%), and half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that driving at or near the speed limit makes it difficult to keep up with traffic.

Reasons for Speeding. Over half of respondents reported speeding because they were going with the traffic flow (62%) or passing another vehicle (58%). Other commonly cited reasons for speeding were due to emergency/illness (46%) and being late (41%).

Figure 2. Reasons for Speeding



Attitudes Toward Enforcement and Speeding Countermeasures

When asked about their attitude toward speed enforcement and speeding countermeasures, respondents generally agreed with the use of enforcement, countermeasures, and types of possible countermeasures. The differences in attitudes become clear when viewed by driver type.

Importance of Reducing Speeding. Most respondents (84%) indicated that it is very or somewhat important to do something to reduce speeders. Examining by driver type indicated that fewer speeders, though still almost two-thirds (63%), reported that it is very or somewhat important. Most sometime speeders (91%) indicated that it is very or somewhat important, compared to 86% of nonspeeders. Few respondents of any driver type believed it is not important at all to do something to reduce speeding. Response ratings of the importance of reducing speeding declined as income level increased. Similarly, as education level increased, the percentage of respondents who indicated reducing speeding was very important decreased.

Enforcement of Speed Limits. Only one-third of respondents (33%) indicated that the speed limit should be enforced all the time. Slightly over one-third of respondents (34%) indicated it should be enforced often and 26% that it should be enforced sometimes. Only 6% thought the speed limit should rarely be enforced, and just 1% reported that it should never be enforced.

Use of Speeding Countermeasures. Countermeasures with the highest percentage of respondents indicating they were a good idea included increasing public awareness of the risks of speeding (76%); electronic signs that warn drivers they are speeding (75%); increased use of speed safety cameras (63%); and road design changes, such as speed humps and traffic circles (56%). Older respondents (65 and older) were over twice as likely to indicate that more frequent ticketing for speeding is a good idea than the youngest drivers (18 to 24). As respondent education and income levels rose, fewer respondents indicated that more frequent ticketing is a good idea. Overall, a high percentage of all demographic groups reported that increasing public awareness of the risks of speeding is a good idea and that electronic signs warning drivers they are speeding are a good idea.

In-Vehicle Countermeasures. The percentages of respondents who indicated speed governors are a good idea varied by the type of driver that would use the speed governor. For example, 44% of respondents believed speed governors are a good idea for truck drivers, while 65% believed they are a good idea for drivers 18 or younger,

and 71% believed they are a good idea for drivers with multiple speeding tickets in one year. Overall, though, few respondents (13%) indicated that speed governors are a good idea for all drivers. Women were more likely than men to agree that speed governors are a good idea for all types of drivers. Younger drivers were less likely than older drivers to think speed governors are a good idea for drivers with two or more speeding tickets.

Speed Safety Cameras. Most respondents (87%) had heard of speed safety cameras being used to ticket drivers who speed and agreed that it would be acceptable to have speed safety cameras in school zones (80%) and frequent crash sites (77%). Slightly fewer respondents thought it was acceptable to have speed safety cameras where it could be hazardous for a police officer to stop a driver (66%), in a construction zone (66%), and where stopping a vehicle could cause traffic congestion (63%). Only one-quarter of respondents (25%) indicated that having speed safety cameras on all roads would be acceptable. Almost half of respondents (46%) agreed or strongly agreed that speed safety cameras are used to prevent accidents. Two-thirds of respondents (67%) agreed or strongly agreed that speed safety cameras are used to generate revenue.

Conclusions

This survey provides a snapshot of respondents' speeding attitudes and behaviors. Using latent class analysis, researchers classified respondents as nonspeeders, sometime speeders, and speeders based on their responses to questions examining driving and speeding tendencies. Broadly, the survey results indicate that respondents have similar attitudes toward speeding from both a normative and personal perspective. Despite the differences observed between driver types throughout the survey results, respondents generally agreed that it is important to do something about speeding and generally agree about the use of certain countermeasures to reduce speeding, such as increasing public awareness about speeding, using electronic signs by the road to warn drivers when they are speeding, and increasing the use of speed cameras. While major differences were observed in responses between nonspeeders and speeders, most respondents were classified as sometime speeders (44%), and often, less-obvious differences existed between sometime speeders and the other two driver types. While sometime speeders generally have anti-speeding attitudes, they also engage in speeding behaviors occasionally. Results suggest the nuances of identifying interventions that can reduce speeding behaviors in the general driver population. Results of this study suggest that attitudinal and behavioral differences between driver types might require different speeding-reduction interventions aimed at different types of drivers.

References

- National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2014, May). *Speeding: 2012 data* (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 812 021). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812021>
- NCSA. (2023, July). *Speeding: 2021 data* (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 813 473). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813473>

How to Access

The final report, *2022-2023 National Survey of Speeding Attitudes and Behaviors* (Report No. DOT HS 813 594), can be downloaded at <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov>.

Suggested APA format citation for this document:

Office of Behavioral Safety Research. (2024, December). *2022-2023 national survey of speeding attitudes and behaviors* (Traffic Tech. Report No. DOT HS 813 595). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

TRAFFIC TECH is a publication to disseminate information about traffic safety programs, including evaluations, innovative programs, and new publications. Feel free to copy it as you wish.