

PROPERTY CRIME TOTAL

DEFINITION

Property crime includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. The object of the theft-type offenses is the taking of money or property, but there is no force or threat of force against the victims. Arson is included since it involves the destruction of property; its victims may be subjected to force.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of offenses¹</i>	<i>Rate per 100,000 inhabitants¹</i>
1999	10,208,334	3,743.6
2000	10,181,462	3,617.9
Percent change	-0.3	-3.4

¹Does not include arson. See page 57.

In 2000, the estimated property crime total (10.2 million offenses) decreased 0.3 percent from 1999 numbers. The 2000 volume was 13.8 percent lower than in 1996, and 21.4 percent lower than in 1991.

The most populated region, the South, recorded 41.0 percent of all property crimes. The West accounted for 23.0 percent of the total. The Midwest States recorded 22.2 percent of the property crimes, and 13.8 percent occurred in the Northeast.

When comparing property crime volumes for 1999 and 2000, the West reported a 1.0-percent increase and the other regions recorded decreases—2.0 percent in the Northeast, 0.6 percent in the Midwest, and 0.2 percent in the South. (See Table 4.)

Among city groupings, property crime declined 0.2 percent in the United States' cities as a whole from 1999 to 2000. Cities with populations of 500,000 to 999,999 inhabitants had the greatest decrease, 0.9 percent. Rural counties experienced a 0.9-percent increase in property crime, and suburban counties registered a decline of 2.0 percent. (See Table 12.)

The greatest number of property crimes in 2000 took place in August, while the fewest occurred in February. (See Table 2.25.)

Table 2.25

Property Crime Total by Month

Percent distribution, 1996-2000

Month	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
January	8.0	8.2	8.6	8.0	7.8
February	7.6	7.3	7.5	7.2	7.4
March	7.9	8.0	8.2	8.0	8.2
April	8.0	8.0	8.0	7.9	7.9
May	8.5	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.6
June	8.4	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.6
July	9.2	9.1	8.9	9.1	9.1
August	9.1	9.0	9.0	9.2	9.2
September	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.5	8.5
October	8.7	8.8	8.5	8.7	8.7
November	7.9	8.0	7.9	8.2	8.1
December	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.4	7.9

Rate

With a rate of 3,617.9 property crimes per 100,000 inhabitants in 2000, the national figure is down 3.4 percent from the 1999 rate. When comparing 5-year and 10-year trends, the rate fell 18.7 percent from 1996 rates and 29.6 percent when compared to 1991 rates.

As in 1999, all four regions registered property crime rate decreases in 2000. The Northeast had the biggest decline—5.2 percent—with a rate of 2,690.9 per 100,000

inhabitants. The South experienced a rate of 4,162.8 per 100,000 inhabitants, a 4.0-percent decrease. The West and Midwest each recorded a 2.3-percent decline in property crime rates per 100,000 inhabitants, with rates of 3,701.5 and 3,517.2, respectively.

Collectively, in the Nation's cities, property crime rates were 4,419.6 per 100,000 inhabitants. In suburban counties, the rate was 2,682.8. In rural counties, the rate was 1,714.9. (See Table 16.)

Nature

More than \$15.9 billion was the estimated total dollar value of property stolen in 2000. The average loss per offense was \$1,562, a decrease from the average loss of \$1,624 in 1999.

Larceny-theft constituted 68.4 percent of all property crimes in 2000. Burglary accounted for 20.1 percent of property crimes, and motor vehicle thefts comprised the remaining 11.4 percent. A total of 11,903 law enforcement agencies reported 68,756 arsons in 2000. The average dollar loss due to reported arsons was \$11,042.

Law Enforcement Response

As in previous years, the 2000 clearance rate for property crimes was lower than for violent crimes. The clearance rate for violent crimes in 2000 was 47.5 percent, and the clearance rate for property crimes was 16.7 percent. By region, property crime clearance rates were 19.8 percent in the Northeast, 16.7 percent in the South, 16.4 percent in the Midwest, and 15.5 percent in the West. (See Table 26.)

Juveniles only (defined as persons under 18 years of age) were involved in 22.1 percent of property crimes cleared by law enforcement nationwide. Juvenile clearances were measured at 22.5 percent in city population groups, 21.3 percent in suburban counties, and 17.8 percent in rural counties. (See Table 28.)

Law enforcement officers made an estimated 1,620,928 arrests for property crimes, which accounted for 11.9 percent of all arrests in 2000. The 2000 arrest total for property crime was 4.6 percent lower than in 1999, 20.9 percent less than in 1996, and 29.6 percent below the 1991 total for property crime arrests. Juvenile arrests nationwide for property crimes dropped 5.3 percent compared to 1999. Adult arrests nationwide for property crimes declined 4.2 percent from 1999. (See Tables 32, 34, and 36.)

Males accounted for 70.1 percent of property crime arrests in 2000. Sixty-eight percent of all arrestees were over age 18, and 66.2 percent of persons arrested were white.

FIGURE 2.12

PROPERTY CRIME

PERCENT CHANGE
from 1996

