

# Stat Sheet

November 2024

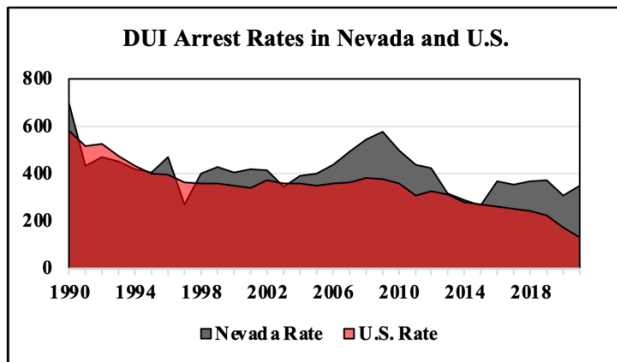
CCJP-SS 2024-11

## Driving Under the Influence: Arrests and Fatalities (1990-2021)

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Driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol and drugs is a serious social problem in Nevada and the entire nation. This Stat Sheet summarizes trends in DUI arrests, fatalities and the characteristics of DUI arrestees over time.

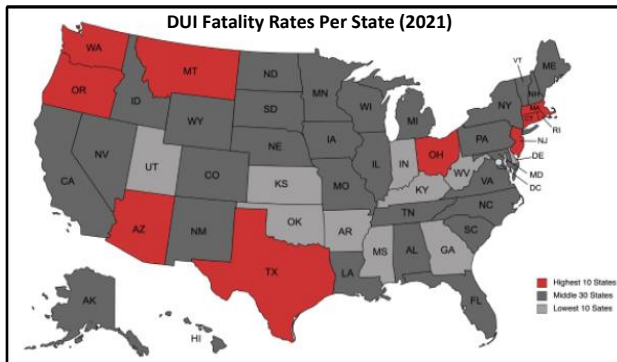
### Key Stats



Source: FBI (1990-2021)

**From 1990 to 2021, Nevada’s DUI arrest rate is typically higher than the national average (Figure 1)**

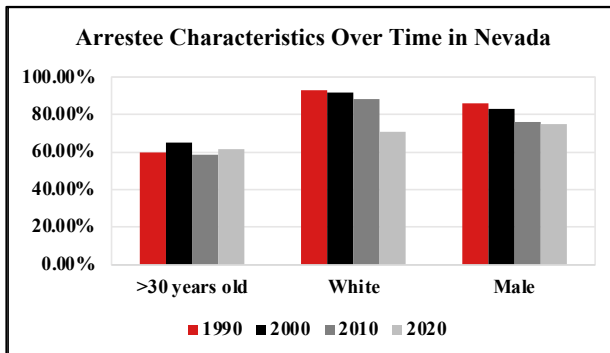
In 2020 alone, there were over 300 DUI arrests per 100,000 people in Nevada. The national rate was 171 arrests per population in this year. While the trend for DUI arrests has been decreasing over time, Nevada continues to have higher rates than the national average. The only exception is in 1991-1994, 1997, 2003, and 2015 when Nevada had lower rates than the national average.



Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2021)

**A large minority of fatal car accidents involved drunk drivers across the United States, but the prevalence of these fatalities varies across states (Figure 2)**

Nevada proportion of DUI-car fatalities (30%) is ranked in the middle of the national distribution of these cases across states. The highest rates are found in Montana, Texas, Washington, Rhode Island, and Ohio. The states of Mississippi, Georgia, and West Virginia have the lowest rates.



Source: FBI (1990-2020)

**Arrest rates for DUI vary by the driver’s age, race, and gender, and these patterns are similar over time (Figure 3)**

The majority of persons arrested for DUI are over 30 years old, White, and male. Depending on the decade, anywhere between 65% to 85% of the arrestees are either White or male and about 60% are aged 30 or older.

**Table: Figure 2 Notes** Percentage of Fatal Accidents Caused by Drunk Drivers in 2021

State	Percentage
Montana	44%
Texas	42%
Ohio	39%
Rhode Island	39%
Washington	39%
Connecticut	38%
New Jersey	38%
Arizona	36%
Massachusetts	36%
Oregon	36%
Illinois	35%
Maryland	35%
South Dakota	35%
New York	34%
Wyoming	34%
Alaska	33%
Iowa	33%
North Dakota	33%
South Carolina	33%
California	32%
New Mexico	32%
Wisconsin	32%
Colorado	31%
Idaho	31%
Louisiana	31%
Vermont	31%
Nevada	30%
New Hampshire	30%
Alabama	29%
Hawaii	29%
Maine	29%
Michigan	29%
Missouri	29%
Nebraska	29%
Virginia	29%
North Carolina	28%
Arkansas	27%
Florida	27%
Minnesota	27%
Pennsylvania	27%
Tennessee	27%
Kansas	26%
Delaware	25%
Indiana	25%
Oklahoma	25%
Kentucky	24%
Utah	24%
West Virginia	23%
Georgia	22%
Mississippi	20%

**Summary of Findings**

Even with the introduction of ride shares, such as Uber or Lyft, rates of DUI arrests and fatalities have not been drastically reduced. Further, a number of ride share apps offer free rides around major holidays (e.g., New Year’s Eve, St. Patrick’s Day) to discourage driving under the influence. Despite these efforts, arrests are still being made daily.

**Contributing Factors**

The cultural setting and demographic breakdown of each state may influence the rate of DUI arrests and fatalities. Demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, education, income, and marital status) influence an individual’s attitudes towards alcohol consumption (Klein & Pittman, 1993). Further, ride share options may be more available in certain states than compared to others (e.g., rural or metropolitan areas).

Some states are major tourist attractions who see more visitors than residents. Nevada presents some difficulty for comparative analysis because the available data does not distinguish between individuals who are arrested for DUIs as Nevada residents or tourists from out of town. In addition, the party lifestyle found in Las Vegas is a contributor and impacts the easy access to alcohol and the normalization of alcohol consumption.

**Sources and Limitations**

The data utilized in this Stat Sheet are based on a variety of sources. Figures 1 and 3 were based on data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) based on Uniform Crime Reports (UCR). This data is limited to all arrests and does not focus on repeat offenders who may have been arrested for DUIs more than once. In addition, this data is limited to DUIs that have been brought to the attention of law enforcement and an arrest was made.

For Figure 2, the data derives from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for 2021. The limitation on DUI fatal accidents is the availability of blood-alcohol content (BAC) levels for each incident. National data is limited because each individual state may have different guidelines and procedures when it comes to DUIs and fatal accidents.

**For references in this Stat Sheet, see the CCJP website: [www.unlv.edu/CCJP](http://www.unlv.edu/CCJP)**