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## *National Crime Victimization Survey*

# Criminal Victimization, 2008

Michael R. Rand  
BJS Statistician

Violent and property crime rates in 2008 were at or near their lowest levels in over three decades, according to findings from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The violent crime rate in 2008—19.3 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or over—was statistically unchanged from the previous year's estimate of 20.7 per 1,000 persons. The property crime rate of 135 victimizations per 1,000 households was lower than the rate of 147 per 1,000 households in 2007.

There was no statistical difference between the 2007 and 2008 crime rates for any crime of violence. Overall in 2008, U.S. residents experienced 4.9 million violent crimes (rape/sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault) and 16.3 million property crimes (household burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft) (table 1). Declines in both motor vehicle theft (-20%) and theft (-9%) contributed to the overall decline in the property crime rate between 2007 and 2008.

Violent and property crime rates, including the rate of every type of violent and property crime measured by the NCVS, declined from 1999 to 2008. The violent crime rate declined by 41% and the property crime rate fell by 32% over the 10-year period. Declines ranged from 23% for household burglary to 53% for rape or sexual assault.

NCVS year-to-year findings between 2007 and 2008 are consistent with the preliminary findings from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. NCVS findings show a nominal, but not statistically significant, decline in the number of violent crimes and a significant decline in the number of property crimes. Findings from the UCR program show small declines in the numbers of violent (-2.5%) and property (-1.6%) crimes. Because both programs measure an overlapping but not an identical set of offenses and use different

**Table 1. Criminal victimization, numbers, rates, and percent change, by type of crime, 2007 and 2008**

Type of crime	Number of victimizations		Rates <sup>a</sup>		Percent change 2007-2008 <sup>b</sup>
	2007	2008	2007	2008	
<b>All crimes</b>	22,879,720	21,312,400	~	~	
<b>Violent crimes<sup>c</sup></b>	5,177,130	4,856,510	20.7	19.3	-6.9%
Rape/sexual assault	248,280	203,830	1.0	0.8	-18.5
Robbery	597,320	551,830	2.4	2.2	-8.3
Assault	4,331,530	4,100,850	17.3	16.3	-6.0
Aggravated	858,940	839,940	3.4	3.3	-2.9
Simple	3,472,590	3,260,920	13.9	12.9	-6.8
<b>Personal theft<sup>d</sup></b>	194,060	136,710	0.8	0.5	-30.1%
<b>Property crimes</b>	17,508,530	16,319,180	146.5	134.7	-8.1%*
Household burglary	3,215,090	3,188,620	26.9	26.3	-2.2
Motor vehicle theft	979,640	795,160	8.2	6.6	-19.9*
Theft	13,313,800	12,335,400	111.4	101.8	-8.6*

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding. Total population age 12 or older was 250,344,870 in 2007 and 252,242,520 in 2008. Total number of households was 119,503,530 in 2007 and 121,141,060 in 2008.

~Not applicable.

\*Difference is significant at the 95%-confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Victimization rates are per 1,000 persons age 12 or older for violent crime or per 1,000 households for property crime.

<sup>b</sup>Percent change calculated based on unrounded estimates.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes murder because the NCVS is based on interviews with victims and therefore cannot measure murder.

<sup>d</sup>Includes pocket picking, completed purse snatching, and attempted purse snatching.

methodologies, exact congruity between NCVS and UCR estimates is not to be expected. Throughout the 37-year history of the NCVS, the programs have generally demonstrated a similar direction in the rise or fall in the year-to-year changes in the levels of violent and property crimes.

A major difference between the programs is that the NCVS obtains estimates of both crimes not reported and those reported to the police. The UCR collects data on reported crimes. According to the NCVS, victims reported 47% of violent crimes and 40% of property crimes to the police in 2008.

## The NCVS collects information from victims of nonfatal violent crimes and property crimes

The NCVS collects information on nonfatal crimes, reported and not reported to the police, against persons age 12 or older from a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. It produces national rates and levels of personal and property victimization, as well as information on the characteristics of crimes and victims and the consequences of victimization to victims.

Violent crimes measured by the NCVS include rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Property crimes include household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft. The survey also measures personal theft, including pocket picking and purse snatching.

In 2008, 42,093 households and 77,852 individuals age 12 and older were interviewed for the NCVS. Each household was interviewed twice during the year. The response rate was 90.4% of households and 86.2% of eligible individuals.

## Violent and property crime rates remain at historic lows in 2008

The violent crime rate has experienced a number of distinct trends throughout the history of the NCVS. Initially, the rate rose somewhat from 1973 to 1981 and declined until 1986. The rate reached a high in 1994, followed by an extended, sharp decline lasting until 2002. The violent crime rate has remained generally stable since 2004.<sup>1</sup> The rate in 2008 was 41% lower than it was 10 years earlier, and 63% below the peak of 51.8 violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older in 1994 (table 2, figure 1).

<sup>1</sup>Trends in victimization rates exclude NCVS estimates for 2006 because of the methodological inconsistencies between the data for 2006 and other years. See NCVS Methodological Changes in 2006 on page 2 (below) and *Criminal Victimization, 2006 Technical Notes* at <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv06tn.pdf>>. Trend data for violent crime are available at <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/viortrdtab.htm>> (last accessed August 17, 2009).

### NCVS Methodological Changes in 2006

A number of methodological changes were implemented in the NCVS in 2006 that impacted the victimization rate estimates for that year. The changes and their impact upon the survey's estimates are described in *Criminal Victimization 2006 Technical Notes*, available online at <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv06.pdf>>.

Analyses of the 2007 data by BJS and the Census Bureau found that the effects were reversed in 2007, suggesting that the 2006 findings represented a temporary anomaly in the data. For this reason, discussion of trends in this report excludes the estimates for 2006. See *Criminal Victimization, 2007* at <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv07.pdf>> for a fuller discussion of 2007 estimates. NCVS estimates for 2008 are consistent with and comparable to estimates for 2007, 2005, and previous years.

Trends for individual types of violent crime varied from 1999 to 2008. Crime rates for simple assault—the least serious but most prevalent violent crime—and robbery declined in the early part of the 10-year period and remained generally unchanged in the latter part. Rates of aggravated assault declined from 1999 through 2002 and remained stable until 2005. Aggravated assault rates for 2007 and 2008 represent new lows for this type of crime (table 3). The rate of rape committed in the U.S. declined from 1999 to 2000 and has remained stable since 2000.

**Table 2. Rates of criminal victimization and percent change, by type of crime, 1999 and 2008**

Type of crime	Victimization rate <sup>a</sup>		
	1999	2008	Percent change 1999-2008 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Violent crimes<sup>c</sup></b>	32.8	19.3	-41.2%*
Rape/sexual assault	1.7	0.8	-52.6*
Robbery	3.6	2.2	-39.4*
Assault	27.4	16.3	-40.8*
Aggravated	6.7	3.3	-50.3*
Simple	20.8	12.9	-37.7*
<b>Personal theft<sup>d</sup></b>	0.9	0.5	-41.4%*
<b>Property crimes</b>	198.0	134.7	-32.0%*
Household burglary	34.1	26.3	-22.8*
Motor vehicle theft	10.0	6.6	-34.1*
Theft	153.9	101.8	-33.9*

Note: In 1999 the total population age 12 or older was 224,568,370 and 252,242,520 in 2008. The total number of households in 1999 was 107,159,550 and 121,141,060 in 2008.

\*Difference is significant at the 95%-confidence level.

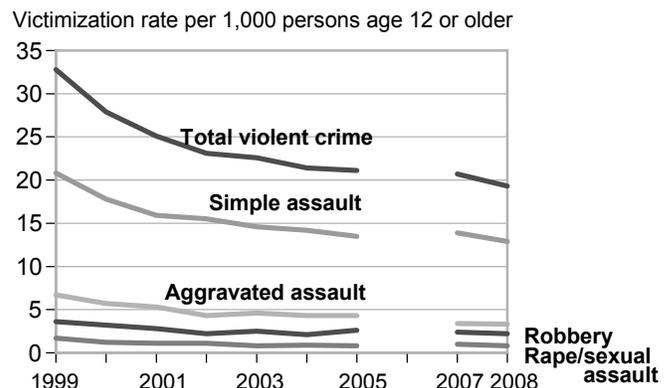
<sup>a</sup>Victimization rates are per 1,000 persons age 12 or older for violent crime or per 1,000 households for property crime.

<sup>b</sup>Differences between the annual rates shown do not take into account changes that may have occurred during interim years. Percent change calculated on unrounded estimates.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes murder because the NCVS is based on interviews with victims and therefore cannot measure murder.

<sup>d</sup>Includes pocket picking, completed purse snatching, and attempted purse snatching.

### Violent crime rates overall fell by 41% from 1999 to 2008



Note: Data for 2006 are excluded. See adjacent box for *NCVS Methodological Changes in 2006*.

Figure 1

Property crime rates, including the rate for each type of property crime measured by the NCVS, have fallen throughout most of the survey's existence. Overall rates fell from 1999 to 2002 and remained stable until 2004 before declining in 2005. The property crime rate per 1,000 households in 2008 was 76% lower than in 1974—the peak year for the rate of this crime—and 32% lower than in 1999 (figure 2).

The rate of burglary declined from 1999 to 2000, remained stable until 2005, and fell in 2007. The rate was unchanged from 2007 to 2008. NCVS findings show that rates of property theft declined in increments during the 10-year period. Property theft decreased from 1999 to 2002, stabilized until 2004, and decreased from 2004 to 2008.

Motor vehicle theft remained stable throughout most of the period despite some fluctuation after its initial decline from 1999 to 2000. The motor vehicle theft rate was at its lowest level in 2008.

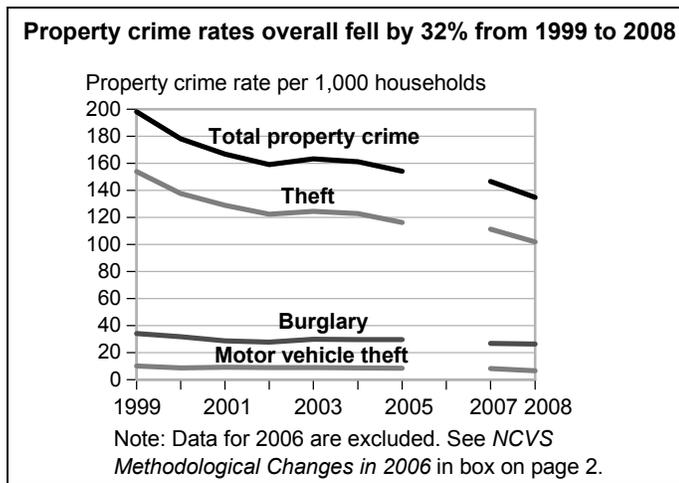


Figure 2

### Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, 2007-2008

Violent crime as measured by the FBI through the UCR includes murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crimes include burglary, larceny theft, and motor vehicle theft. The UCR program measures crimes against both persons and businesses reported to the police. For information about the differences and similarities of the NCVS and UCR, see *The Nation's Two Crime Measures* at <[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/ntcm.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/ntcm.pdf)>.

According to the preliminary UCR results released by the FBI, the number of violent crimes reported to law enforcement declined by 2.5% between 2007 and 2008. UCR data showed a decline in the number of every crime measured with one exception: burglary increased by 1.3% (text table 1).

**Text table 1. Percent changes in the number of crimes reported in the UCR, 2007-2008**

Crime measured by the UCR	Percent change in the number of crimes reported
<b>Violent crimes</b>	-2.5%
Murder	-4.4
Forcible rape	-2.2
Robbery	-1.1
Aggravated	-3.2
<b>Property crime</b>	-1.6%
Burglary	1.3
Larceny theft	-0.6
Motor vehicle theft	-13.1

Note: See the Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report from January to December 2008 <<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/08aprelim/index.html>> for more information (last accessed August 17, 2009).

**Table 3. National crime victimization rates and percent change in rates, by type of crime, 2005-2008**

Type of crime	Rates per 1,000 persons or households			Percent change in rates <sup>a</sup>		
	2005	2007	2008	2005-2007	2005-2008	2007-2008
<b>Violent crime</b>	21.1	20.7	19.3	-2.1%	-8.8%	-6.9%
Rape/sexual assault	0.8	1.0	0.8	27.2	3.7	-18.5
Robbery	2.6	2.4	2.2	-7.4	-15.1	-8.3
Assault	17.8	17.3	16.3	-2.6	-8.4	-6.0
Aggravated	4.3	3.4	3.3	-19.8*	-22.2*	-2.9
Simple	13.5	13.9	12.9	2.9	-4.1	-6.8
<b>Personal larceny without contact</b>	0.9	0.8	0.5	-17.4%	-42.2%*	-30.1%
<b>Property crime</b>	154.2	146.5	134.7	-5.0%**	-12.7%*	-8.1%*
Burglary	29.6	26.9	26.3	-9.1%**	-11.0%**	-2.2
Motor vehicle theft	8.4	8.2	6.6	-2.2	-21.7*	-19.9*
Theft	116.3	111.4	101.8	-4.2	-12.4*	-8.6*
<b>Populations</b>						
Persons age 12 or older	244,505,300	250,344,870	252,242,520			
Households headed by persons age 12 or older	117,099,820	119,503,530	121,141,060			

Note: Estimates for 2006 are excluded because the estimates are not comparable to other years. See NCVS *Methodological Changes in 2006* in box on page 2.

\*Difference is significant at the 95%-confidence level.

\*\*Difference is significant at the 90%-confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Percent change calculated based on unrounded estimates.

## Victims of violent crimes in 2008 were similar to those in previous years

Characteristics of victims of violent crimes measured by the NCVS in 2008 were similar to previous years. Males, blacks, and persons age 24 or younger experienced violent victimizations at higher or somewhat higher rates than females, whites, and persons age 25 or older (table 4).

### Gender

Females were more likely than males to be victims of rape or sexual assault. Males experienced higher rates of victimization than females in all other violent crimes measured by the NCVS.

### Race

With the exception of simple assault, blacks experienced higher rates than whites for every violent crime measured by the NCVS. Blacks also had higher rates than persons of other races (American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander) of overall violence and simple assault, and marginally higher rates of robbery and aggravated assault.

In 2008, 1% of the U.S. population self-identified as being of more than one race. Individuals of more than one race experienced violent crime at rates 2 to 3 times higher than whites, blacks, or persons of other races.

### Hispanic origin

Non-Hispanics experienced overall violent crime at a rate somewhat higher than Hispanics in 2008. A higher rate of simple assault for non-Hispanics contributed to this finding. Hispanics were more likely than non-Hispanics to be victims of robbery in 2008, a finding consistent with previous years.

### Age

Victimization rates in 2008 for violent crime decreased with age. Generally, for every crime measured by the NCVS, persons age 12 to 24 had the highest rates of victimization; persons age 50 or older had the lowest rates. Juveniles age 12 to 15 experienced higher rates of simple assault than persons age 25 or older, and marginally higher rates than persons age 20 to 24.

### Lower income households and larger households experienced higher property crime rates

In general, an inverse relationship between property crime rates and annual household incomes exists. Lower income households had higher rates of overall property crime, household burglary, and property theft, compared to higher income households in 2008 (table 5).

**Table 4. Rates of violent crime, by gender, race, Hispanic origin, and age of victim, 2008**

Demographic characteristic of victim	Population	All	Violent victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older				
			Rape/sexual assault	Robbery	All assault	Aggravated assault	Simple assault
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	123,071,020	21.3	0.3 <sup>^</sup>	2.7	18.3	3.9	14.5
Female	129,171,510	17.3	1.3	1.7	14.3	2.8	11.5
<b>Race</b>							
White	204,683,500	18.1	0.6	1.6	15.9	3.0	12.8
Black	30,709,860	25.9	1.9 <sup>^</sup>	5.5	18.5	5.2	13.3
Other race*	13,952,240	15.2	0.9 <sup>^</sup>	3.0 <sup>^</sup>	11.3	2.8	8.5
Two or more races	2,896,930	51.6	1.9 <sup>^</sup>	6.8	42.9	6.8	36.1
<b>Hispanic origin</b>							
Hispanic	34,506,680	16.4	0.6 <sup>^</sup>	3.4	12.4	3.5	8.9
Non-Hispanic	217,351,750	19.7	0.8	2.0	16.9	3.3	13.6
<b>Age</b>							
12-15	16,414,550	42.2	1.6 <sup>^</sup>	5.5	35.2	6.1	29.0
16-19	17,280,270	37.0	2.2	4.8	30.0	5.6	24.5
20-24	20,547,620	37.8	2.1	5.4	30.3	8.7	21.5
25-34	40,649,500	23.4	0.7	2.3	20.5	4.0	16.5
35-49	65,123,030	16.7	0.8	1.9	14.1	2.7	11.4
50-64	55,116,320	10.7	0.2 <sup>^</sup>	0.8	9.7	2.0	7.7
65 or older	37,111,240	3.1	0.2 <sup>^</sup>	0.2 <sup>^</sup>	2.7	0.4 <sup>^</sup>	2.3

Note: Violent crimes measured by the National Crime Victimization Survey include rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault. Because the NCVS interviews persons about their victimizations, murder and manslaughter cannot be included.

<sup>^</sup>Based upon 10 or fewer sample cases.

\*Includes American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders.

Differences between the property crime rates for households in the lowest and highest income groups were smaller for theft than for burglary. Households in the lowest income group—less than \$7,500 per year—experienced property crime rates that were about 1.5 times higher than the rates for households earning \$75,000 or more per year; burglary rates were more than 3 times higher. There were no differences between income groups in the rates of motor vehicle theft.

In general, property crime rates were directly related to household size in 2008. With three exceptions, larger households experienced higher rates of property crime per 1,000 households than smaller households. Apparent differences in the rates of burglary and motor vehicle theft for

households with four or five persons and for those with six persons or more were not statistically significant. In addition, no statistically significant differences were found in the rates of motor vehicle theft between single person households and those with two or three persons. For every type of property crime, households with six persons or more experienced higher victimization rates than smaller households.

### Victims knew the offenders in about 5 in 10 violent crimes against men and 7 in 10 violent crimes against women

The percentage of violent crime committed against males and females by someone they knew (i.e., nonstranger) is driven by assault (table 6). Male victims knew the offenders in half of all aggravated and simple assaults against them. Female victims knew the offenders in approximately 70% of assaults against them. Offenders known to the victims were most often identified as friends or acquaintances, accounting for a similar percentage of violence against male (42%) and female (38%) victims.

Strangers were responsible for about a third (36%) of all violent crimes measured by the NCVS in 2008 (not shown in table). The percentages of overall violence, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault committed by strangers were higher for males than for females. Robbery was the crime most likely to be committed by a stranger. Strangers committed 61% of robberies against men and 45% of robberies against women.

The greatest disparity between violent crimes committed against males and females in 2008 was in the percentage committed by intimate partners. The NCVS defines intimate partners as current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girl-

**Table 5. Property crime rates, by household income and household size, 2008**

Characteristics of household	Number of households	Victimization per 1,000 households			
		Total	Burglary	Motor vehicle theft	Theft
<b>Household income</b>					
Less than \$7,500	4,115,470	204.2	56.6	9.4	138.3
\$7,500-\$14,999	6,361,960	175.0	52.6	7.8	114.6
\$15,000-\$24,999	9,412,930	161.7	32.3	6.2	123.2
\$25,000-\$34,999	9,901,970	150.5	33.0	6.0	111.5
\$35,000-\$49,999	13,497,280	142.7	26.8	7.5	108.5
\$50,000-\$74,999	14,601,440	125.8	21.1	7.6	97.0
\$75,000 or more	24,115,150	133.4	16.3	5.9	111.2
<b>Number of persons in household</b>					
1	34,561,280	100.3	27.4	4.7	68.2
2 or 3	60,022,010	122.2	22.1	6.1	94.0
4 or 5	22,868,210	197.0	33.3	9.1	154.6
6 or more	3,689,560	273.9	41.0	15.7	217.1

**Table 6. Relationship between victim and offender, by gender of victim, 2008**

Relationship to victim	Violent crime		Rape/sexual assault		Robbery		Aggravated assault		Simple assault	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Male victims</b>										
<b>Total</b>	2,626,000	100%	39,590	100%	328,690	100%	476,390	100%	1,781,330	100%
Nonstranger	1,286,170	49%	39,590	100%^	112,230	34%	241,900	51%	892,440	50%
Intimate partner*	88,120	3	8,310	21^	0	0^	37,430	8^	42,380	2
Other relative	83,630	3	0	0^	0	0^	25,560	5^	58,070	3
Friend/acquaintance	1,114,410	42	31,280	79^	112,230	34	178,910	38	791,990	44
Stranger	1,163,410	44%	0	0%^	200,150	61%	206,300	43%	756,970	42%
Relationship unknown	176,420	7%	0	0%^	16,310	5%^	28,190	6%^	131,920	7%
<b>Female victims</b>										
<b>Total</b>	2,230,500	100%	164,240	100%	223,140	100%	363,550	100%	1,479,580	100%
Nonstranger	1,556,790	70%	102,950	63%	118,220	53%	250,190	69%	1,085,430	73%
Intimate partner*	504,980	23	29,060	18	34,830	16	61,170	17	379,920	26
Other relative	196,070	9	5,220	3^	33,210	15^	28,150	8^	129,490	9
Friend/acquaintance	855,740	38	68,680	42	50,180	22	160,860	44	576,010	39
Stranger	592,570	27%	52,890	32%	99,450	45%	104,410	29%	335,810	23%
Relationship unknown	81,150	4%	8,390	5%^	5,470	2%^	8,950	2%^	58,340	4%^

Note: Percentages may not total to 100% because of rounding.

^Based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

\*Defined as current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends.

friends. Intimate partners were responsible for 3% of all violence against males and 23% of all violence against females in 2008. From 2007 to 2008, there was no significant difference in the numbers and rates of intimate partner victimizations for males and females (text table 2).

**Text table 2. Number and rate of intimate partner violence, by victims' gender, 2007 and 2008**

	2007		2008	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Male	69,100	0.6	88,120	0.7
Female	554,260	4.3	504,980	3.9

### Firearms were used in 7% of all violent crimes in 2007 and 2008

An offender was armed with a gun, knife, or other object used as a weapon in an estimated 20% of all incidents of violent crime in 2008 (table 7). By specific weapon type, offenders used about equal percentages of firearms, knives, and other weapons to commit violent crimes overall. Robberies (40%) were the most likely crime to involve an armed offender. Firearms (24%) were the most common weapon used in robberies.

Offenders used firearms to commit 7% of all violent crimes in both 1999 and 2008 (text table 3). The rate of firearm violence declined from 2.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older in 1999 to 1.4 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older in 2008. The percentage of all incidents of violent crime committed with firearms fluctuated between 6% and 9% during the 10-year period. (See <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/firearmnonfatalno.htm>>. Last accessed August 17, 2009).

**Text table 3. Firearm use in violent crime, 1999 and 2008**

	1999	2008
<b>Firearm</b>		
Incidents	457,150	303,880
Victimizations	562,870	343,550
<b>Firearm crime</b>		
Rate per 1,000 persons age 12 or older	2.5	1.4
Percent of all violent incidents	6.8%	6.6%

### Nearly half of all violent crimes and 40% of all property crimes were reported to police in 2008

Of the violent offenses measured by the NCVS, robbery (61%) and aggravated assault (62%) were more likely than rape/sexual assault and simple assault (each 41%) to be reported to the police (text table 4). Of the property crimes measured, motor vehicle theft (80%) was the crime most frequently reported to the police in 2008.

**Text table 4. Percent of crimes reported to police, 2008**

Type of crime	Percent of crime reported to police, 2008
<b>Violent crime</b>	47.1%
Rape/sexual assault	41.4
Robbery	60.5
Aggravated assault	62.0
Simple assault	41.3
<b>Property crime</b>	40.3%
Burglary	56.2
Motor vehicle theft	79.6
Theft	33.6

The percentage of violent crime reported to the police fluctuated during the 10-year period from 1999 to 2008 (figure 3). The percentage of violent crime reported in 2008 (47%) was not significantly different from the percentage reported in 1999 (44%). The percentage of property crimes reported to police in 2008 was higher than from 1999 to 2001, and not significantly different from the percentages reported from 2002 to 2005. Percentages reported for 2008 were also higher than those reported in 2007.

Violent crimes against females were somewhat more likely to be reported to the police in 2008 than violent crimes against males (table 8). Violent crimes against black females were reported to a greater extent than those against white females or against males of any race, and to a slightly greater extent than those against females of other races. There were no differences in the likelihood of violent crimes against male and female Hispanics or non-Hispanics being reported to the police.

**Table 7. Presence of weapons in violent incidents, by type, 2008**

Presence of offender's weapon	Violent crime		Rape/sexual assault		Robbery		Simple and aggravated assault	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	4,581,260	100%	200,520	100%	504,110	100%	3,876,640	100%
<b>No weapon</b>	3,375,090	74%	159,590	80%	248,420	49%	2,967,070	77%
<b>Weapon</b>	905,100	20%	2,730 <sup>^</sup>	1% <sup>^</sup>	200,930	40%	701,440	18%
Firearm	303,880	7	0 <sup>^</sup>	0 <sup>^</sup>	119,640	24	184,240	5
Knife	276,170	6	2,730 <sup>^</sup>	1 <sup>^</sup>	54,160	11	219,280	6
Other	258,340	6	0 <sup>^</sup>	0 <sup>^</sup>	19,880	4	238,460	6
Type not ascertained	66,710	1	0 <sup>^</sup>	0 <sup>^</sup>	7,240 <sup>^</sup>	1 <sup>^</sup>	59,460	2
<b>Don't know</b>	301,070	7%	38,190 <sup>^</sup>	19% <sup>^</sup>	54,760	11%	208,130	5%

Note: Percentage may not total to 100% because of rounding. If the offender was armed with more than one weapon, the crime is classified based on the most serious weapon present.

<sup>^</sup>Based upon 10 or fewer sample cases.

Property crimes against households were equally likely to be reported to the police whether the head of household was male or female. For households with a black female head of household, property crimes were more likely or somewhat more likely to be reported than property crimes against all other households. For households with a male head of household, property offenses against non-Hispanics were reported at a somewhat higher rate than those against Hispanics. No differences emerged in the likelihood of property crime being reported between female Hispanic and non-Hispanic heads of households.

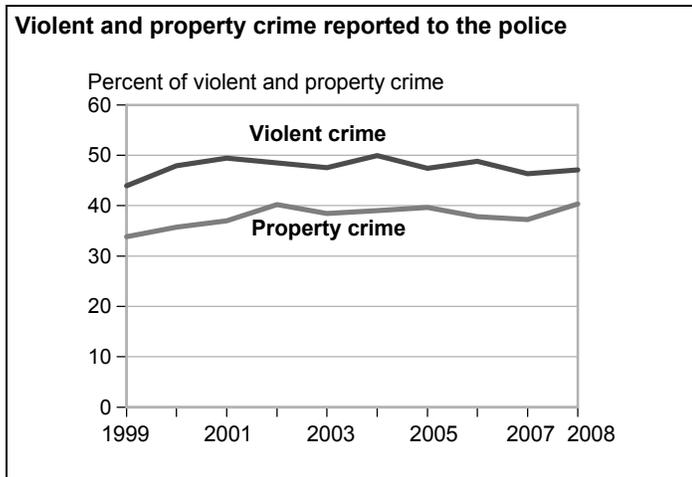


Figure 3

**Table 8. Crime reported to the police, by gender, race, and Hispanic origin, 2008**

Victim gender, race, and Hispanic origin	Percent of crime reported to police, 2008	
	Violent	Property
<b>Total</b>	47.1%	40.3%
<b>Male</b>	44.2%	41.6%
White	44.1	42.1
Black	50.4	39.4
Other race*	30.7	36.8
Hispanic	44.0%	36.7%
Non-Hispanic	44.3	42.6
<b>Female</b>	50.4%	39.0%
White	47.9	37.1
Black	68.5	48.7
Other race*	46.7	33.7
Hispanic	54.1%	35.4%
Non-Hispanic	50.0	39.7

Note: Total includes estimates for persons identifying with two or more races, not shown separately. Racial categories displayed are for persons who identified with one race.

\*Includes American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders.

## Methodology

The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is an annual data collection conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). The NCVS collects information on nonfatal crimes, reported and not reported to the police, against persons age 12 or older from a nationally representative sample of U.S. households.

Violent crimes measured by the NCVS include rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Property crimes include household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft.

Survey results are based on the data gathered from residents living throughout the United States, including persons living in group quarters, such as dormitories, rooming houses, and religious group dwellings. The scope of the survey excluded Armed Forces personnel living in military barracks and persons living in an institutional setting, such as a correctional facility.

Each housing unit selected for the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) remains in the sample for 3 years, with each of seven interviews taking place at 6-month intervals. An NCVS field representative's first contact with a household selected for the survey is in person. The field representative may conduct subsequent interviews by telephone. To elicit more accurate reporting of incidents, the NCVS uses a self-respondent method that requires a direct interview with each person 12 years or older in the household.

Annual collection year estimates of the levels and rates of victimization are derived by accumulating estimates quarterly. The weights of all crimes reported during the interviews in that year are summed, regardless of when the crime occurred. The base for the collection year rate for personal crimes is the sum of all person weights. The base for the property crime rates is the sum of all household weights. For more detail, see the *Methodology for Criminal Victimization in the United States, Statistical Tables*, at <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cvusst.htm>>.

As discussed in *Criminal Victimization, 2006* and *Criminal Victimization, 2007*, methodological changes implemented in 2006 impacted the estimates for that year to an extent that the estimates were not comparable to those of previous years. An evaluation of 2007 and 2008 data from the NCVS conducted by BJS and the Census Bureau found a high degree of confidence that estimates for 2007 and 2008 are consistent with and comparable to those for 2005 and previous years. For this reason, discussion of trends in the rates of crime excludes the 2006 data.



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Data from 2006 are included in the discussion of trends in fire-arms and police reporting because the effects on the 2006 estimates were on the levels and rates of crime and did not impact the distributions across the variables describing the characteristics and consequences of crime. BJS and the Census Bureau continue to examine the impact of the methodological changes on the survey estimates. The reports, *Criminal Victimization, 2006* and *Criminal Victimization, 2007*, are available at <[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv06.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv06.pdf)> and <[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv07.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/cv07.pdf)>.

BJS tested the comparisons between the percentages and rates for *Criminal Victimization, 2008*, to determine the statistical significance of observed differences. Differences described as higher, lower, or different passed a test at the 0.05 level of statistical significance (95%-confidence level). Differences described as somewhat, slightly, marginally, or some indication passed a test at the 0.10 level of statistical significance (90%-confidence level). Caution is required when comparing estimates not explicitly discussed in this bulletin.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Michael D. Sinclair is Acting Director.

BJS Bulletins present the first release of findings from permanent data collection programs.

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Georgette Walsh and Jill Duncan edited the report. Tina Dorsey and Jayne Robinson produced and prepared the report for final printing, under the supervision of Doris J. James.

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This report in portable document format and in ASCII and its related statistical data are available at the BJS World Wide Web Internet site: <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv08.htm>>

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