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TRAFFIC

New study charts the most dangerous times to drive in the US



[Krys'tal Griffin](#)

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Driving is a part of daily life for many comes with risk.

Distracted drivers, traffic and inclement weather all contribute to road hazards, meanwhile sometimes the time of day someone is driving also increases the risk.

One new study, breaking down 2024 driving data, looked to determine the deadliest hour on the road in the United States.

And it might not be what you think.

Deadliest times to drive in America



The Route 1 bridge over Route 16 in Milton April 14, 2026

On U.S. roads in 2024, 39,297 fatal crashes caused nearly the same amount of fatalities, or 39,254. That's 107 deaths every day on average, or more than four every hour, according to Van Sant Law, a personal injury law firm.

Fatal and serious traffic crashes in 2024 cost about \$1.83 billion in societal harm, alongside \$455 billion in direct economic costs and \$1.38 trillion in quality-of-life losses, according to [TRIP](#), a national transportation research nonprofit.

With those outcomes in mind, Van Sant Law reviewed traffic fatality data to find out [the most dangerous times to drive](#).

While people might assume morning rush hour may be the riskiest time to drive, but Van Sant Law's study found the the hour from 8 p.m. to about 9 saw 2,195 fatal crashes in 2024.

That hour alone held 6% of the total yearly road deaths that year. The fuller evening window, from 5 to 9 p.m., held nearly 10,500 fatal crashes, or close to 29% of the year's total.

The safest hour on the roads, according to this study, was 9 a.m. That held fewer than half the 8 p.m. count, at 962.



people, but it still

The top months for fatal crashes were May, June, August, September and October.

Those months accounted for more than 16,000 fatal crashes, nearly 45% of all recorded traffic fatalities that year. October was the deadliest with 3,369 fatal crashes, followed by August with 3,342, September with 3,227, June with 3,199 and May with 3,178. October is said to be the deadliest due to back-to-school traffic patterns, earlier sunsets and drinking habits as warm-weather social activities continue into early fall. The other deadliest months tie into the vacation-heavy period between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekend, known as the "100 deadliest days of summer." Van Sant Law found that 10,438 people died on American roads from the beginning of June to the end of August, an average of 113 deaths per day.

Here's how the rest of the months fared in the study:

- July with 3,092 fatal crashes
- November with 3,077 fatal crashes
- April with 2,938 fatal crashes
- December with 2,896 fatal crashes
- March with 2,893 fatal crashes
- January with 2,538 fatal crashes
- February with 2,498 fatal crashes

When it comes to the most dangerous days of the week to drive, Saturday recorded the highest number of incidents in 2024 with 6,218 fatal crashes. That's 17.13% of all annual fatal crashes. Sunday trailed with 5,597 fatal crashes, followed by Friday with 5,588.



Side mirror view of traffic behind car. Trygve Finkelsen/Getty Images

The rest of the days were pretty consistent:

- Thursday at No. 4, with 4,832 fatal crashes
- Monday at No. 5, with 4,766 fatal crashes
- Wednesday at No. 6, with 4,753 fatal crashes
- Tuesday at No. 7, with 4,543 fatal crashes

More men also died in 2024 crashes than women.

Van Sant Law's review of 2024 Fatality Analysis Reporting System data revealed 28,385 men were killed in fatal crashes compared to 10,764 women. Male fatalities accounted for 72.3% of all recorded traffic deaths, making up nearly three out of every four people killed on American roads.

Study data attributed the longstanding gender discrepancy to the more miles covered by men, as well as male drivers being more likely to speed, drive aggressively, fail to use a seat belt or drive while impaired.

Got a tip or a story idea? Contact Krys'tal Griffin at kgriffin@delawareonline.com.