



## Bureau of Justice Statistics

# Survey of State Prison Inmates, 1991

- Inmate characteristics
- Family characteristics
- Recidivism
- Drug/alcohol use
- Gang membership
- HIV/AIDS
- Sentence/time served
- Gun possession and use
- Victims of violent inmates
- Prison programs



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# Survey of State Prison Inmates, 1991

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March 1993, NCJ-136949

## Foreword

The 1991 Survey of Inmates in State Correctional Facilities is a prime source of information about persons held in prisons across the Nation. Through lengthy interviews and detailed questions with a representative sample of State inmates, the survey complements the statistical series that rely on official agency data. The survey data provide a profile of who is in prison and how they got there. The 1991 survey, together with similar surveys conducted in 1974, 1979, and 1986, represents the largest single database on the Nation's prisoners and is an invaluable resource for evaluating the effectiveness of current incarceration policies and practices.

This report presents statistical information in a format that can be easily understood by a nontechnical audience. We hope the readers of this report and forthcoming special studies derived from the 1991 survey will find these data useful and informative.

This survey was made possible only through the cooperation and assistance of many committed professionals. We are grateful to officials in the departments of correction in the 45 States selected in the survey; to the wardens, superintendents, records managers, and correctional officers in the 277 facilities that provided resources and assistance in conducting the interviews; and to the U.S. Bureau of the Census staff who conducted the interviews and processed the data. We also acknowledge with pride the work of members of the BJS corrections unit who, as a team, designed the survey, monitored data collection, and analyzed the results.

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# The Survey of Inmates in State Correctional Facilities informs the Nation on a wide array of criminal justice issues

## **For the first time in a national survey, Inmates responded to questions about owning and using guns, gang membership, HIV testing, and entering prison pregnant**

In the summer of 1991, 13,986 inmates answered questions in face-to-face interviews. The prisoners, a scientific sample for the Nation, represented more than 711,000 adults held in State correctional facilities. In a session lasting from several minutes to more than an hour, each inmate described his or her criminal history, family and employment background, and any involvement with drugs and alcohol. Each inmate also reported on participation in correctional programs and past education. Inmates convicted of a violent crime were asked about their victim.

After the last such survey in 1986, the prison population had grown 58%, more than 261,000 additional prisoners. In 1991 the incarceration rate — the number sentenced to more than a year in State facilities for each 100,000 residents in the general population — was about 287 per 100,000; 5 years earlier, the rate was 207 prisoners per 100,000 residents.

## **Simultaneous with the State inmate survey, a Federal prison survey interviewed 8,500 inmates**

Together the Federal and State studies provide the most comprehensive information on the Nation's prisoners ever obtained. Used alone or analyzed together with the three previous surveys of State prison inmates conducted in 1974, 1979, and 1986, these 1991 data serve many purposes.

As national data they provide a benchmark against which States may compare their prison populations, perhaps to judge the results of particular policies. State prison authorities may also use the surveys as a source for a uniform set of measures and descriptors.

## **The potential benefits of national data will touch a large number of crucial topics**

Persons seeking to understand the factors that contribute to or prevent crime have in these data a readily available wealth of background and empirical evidence that can bear close scrutiny. When considered with other survey findings or population studies, the data garnered by the surveys of inmates will enable scholars, policymakers, and practitioners to test many assertions and conclusions.

The following are examples of issues that can be examined using data from the 1991 survey:

- Relationships among demographic and criminal justice characteristics of State inmates
- Responses by the criminal justice system to young offenders and the later patterns of offending
- Prison sentences and time served as related to turnover of prison population
- Identifying patterns of offending for high-risk offenders in prison
- Generational or cohort aspects of criminal careers, types of crimes committed, and the responses of the criminal justice system
- Violent crime events understood in terms of time, place, persons involved, and outcome
- Family history as a factor in criminal history of serious offenders in State prison
- Gang membership as an aggravating element in crime
- Roles of drug and alcohol use in crime and in the criminal histories of offenders
- Statistical descriptions of firearm possession, handgun use in a crime, and sources of handguns, for both violent and nonviolent inmates.

## **Experienced personnel of the Bureau of the Census conducted the confidential interviews**

Working on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), trained Bureau of the Census interviewers conducted the interviews in 277 prisons nationwide. At each institution, inmates were chosen systematically from the day's roster, with a specific "take rate" or selection probability being applied. Many of the interviewers who conducted the 1991 interviews had also staffed the previous surveys, and many had participated in the 1989 survey of local jail inmates.

The interviewers met the prisoners alone, often in rooms out of the sight, as well as beyond the hearing of correctional officers and other inmates. The inmates received written and verbal guarantees that the information they reported would be kept confidential. They were told that they would be neither compelled to participate nor rewarded for participating. If inmates could not speak English, they could bring other inmates to translate or could request an interviewer who spoke their language. Altogether, 94% of the selected inmates were interviewed.

## **Information gained through interviews with prisoners is generally reliable**

Personal interviewing of prisoners is the most efficient means — and for some information, the only means — to gather certain data with a national scope. Independent researchers, studying how truthfully prison inmates respond to survey questions, have found that the responses generally agree with data from official records. Also, findings aggregated from the inmate surveys do not differ appreciably from information reported by correctional authorities, and information from separate surveys fit coherent and consistent patterns.

Just as is true of respondents to other surveys, inmates may sometimes have forgotten or confused details like dates and sequences of events. Heavy drug or alcohol use and limited educational or intellectual attainment may have distorted some answers in a long questionnaire.

The survey findings represent the reports of a sample of State prison inmates only and should not be generalized to the entire offender population. Inmates in State prisons account for about 17% of the total adult correctional population. These inmates have usually committed the most serious offenses or have the most extensive criminal records.

# The State prison population increased 58% in 5 years but remained mostly male, minority, and young

In June 1991 State prisons held more than 711,000 inmates. In the 5 years from 1986 to 1991, the number of prisoners grew by over 58%.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Prison population</b>	Facilities	1,239	903
	Inmates	711,643	450,416

Women were 5% of the inmates in 1991, up from 4% in 1986.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Sex</b>	Male	95%	96%
	Female	5	4

Sixty-five percent of prison inmates belonged to racial or ethnic minorities in 1991, up from 60% in 1986.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Race or Hispanic origin</b>	White*	35%	40%
	Black*	46	45
	Other*	2	3
	Hispanic	17	13

\*Non-Hispanic inmates

Sixty-eight percent of inmates were under age 35 in 1991, down from 73% in 1986.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Age</b>	17 or younger	1%	1%
	18-24	21	27
	25-34	46	46
	35-44	23	19
	45-54	7	5
	55-64	2	2
	65 or older	1	1

Marital status of prison inmates remained the same from 1986 to 1991; about a fifth were married and over half had never married.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Marital status</b>	Married	18%	20%
	Widowed	2	2
	Divorced	19	18
	Separated	6	6
	Never married	55	54

About 34% of inmates in 1991 and 29% in 1986 had completed high school. Among dropouts in the 1991 survey, 37% — about a quarter of all prisoners — had gotten a general equivalency degree (GED). Altogether, 59% of inmates had a high school diploma or its equivalent.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Education</b>	8th grade or less	19%	21%
	Some high school	46	51
	High school graduate	22	18
	Some college or more	12	11

Two-thirds of inmates were employed during the month before they were arrested for their current offense; over half were employed full time.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Work before arrest</b>	Employed	67%	69%
	Full time	55	57
	Part time	12	12
	Not employed	33%	31%
	Looking for work	16	18
	Not looking	16	13

Before their admission to prison, an estimated 38% of women and 13% of men were receiving support from Social Security, welfare, or charity.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Income</b>	Annual income for inmates free at least a year		
	No income	3%	2%
	Less than \$3,000	19	25
	\$3,000-\$4,999	10	12
	\$5,000-\$9,999	21	22
	\$10,000-\$14,999	17	16
	\$15,000-\$24,999	16	13
	\$25,000 or more	15	11

The percentage of veterans among prison inmates declined from 20% in 1986 to 16% in 1991.

		<u>1991</u>	<u>1986</u>
<b>Veteran status</b>	Veterans	16%	20%
	Vietnam era	3	5
	Other	14	15
Nonveterans	84%	80%	

# Inmates sentenced for a drug offense accounted for 44% of the increase in the prison population from 1986 to 1991

## Violent crimes accounted for the largest percentage of the inmates' most serious current offense in both 1991 and 1986

	Percent of inmates	
	1991	1986
Violent offenses	46.6%	54.6%
Murder	11	11
Negligent manslaughter	2	3
Kidnaping	1	2
Rape	4	4
Other sexual assault	6	5
Robbery	15	21
Assault	8	8.0
Other violent	.6	.8
Property offenses	24.8%	31.0%
Burglary	12	17
Larceny/theft	5	6.0
Motor vehicle theft	2	1
Arson	.7	.8
Fraud	3	4
Stolen property	1	2.0
Other property	.4	.5
Drug offenses	21.3%	8.6%
Possession	8	3
Trafficking	13	5
Other/unspecified	.5	.3
Public-order offenses	6.9%	5.2%
Weapons	2	1
Other public-order	5	4
Other offenses	.4%	.7%
Number of prison inmates	704,181	449,912

See page 30 for descriptions of the offense categories. Survey numbers on which statistics are based are also reported in the *Explanatory notes*.

Fig. 1

- Among the inmates in 1991 — fewer than half were sentenced for a violent crime
- a fourth were sentenced for a property crime
- about a fifth were sentenced for a drug crime.

## Violent inmates

- The percentage of prisoners serving time for violent crimes fell from 55% in 1986 to 47% in 1991, but the number increased from 245,600 to 328,000 in 1991. This was a 34%-increase in the number of violent inmates.

## Inmates convicted of homicide

- 12% of inmates in 1991 and 14% in 1986 were serving a sentence for homicide (murder or manslaughter).
- The number of inmates convicted of homicide rose from 65,000 to 87,500, a 35%-increase.

## Inmates convicted of robbery

- Of the individual offense categories, robbery had the largest percentage decrease, from 21% of all inmates in 1986 to 15% in 1991.

## Inmates serving time for a property offense

- Property offenders were 25% of all inmates in 1991, a decrease from 31% in 1986.
- Most of this decline resulted from a decreased percentage of inmates sentenced for burglary.
- Nevertheless, the estimate of inmates in State prison for burglary in 1991 (87,500) exceeded the estimated 74,400 of 5 years earlier.

## Sentenced drug offenders

- The percentage of inmates in prison for a drug crime rose from 9% in 1986 to 21% in 1991.
- Over 3 times as many inmates were serving a prison sentence for a drug charge in 1991 (150,300) as in 1986 (38,500).

## In 1991 women in prison were more likely than men to be serving a sentence for drug offenses

Current offense	Women		Men	
	1991	1986	1991	1986
Violent	32%	41%	47%	55%
Property	29	41	25	31
Drug	33	12	21	8
Public-order	6	5	7	5
Number of inmates	38,462	19,761	665,719	430,151

Fig. 2



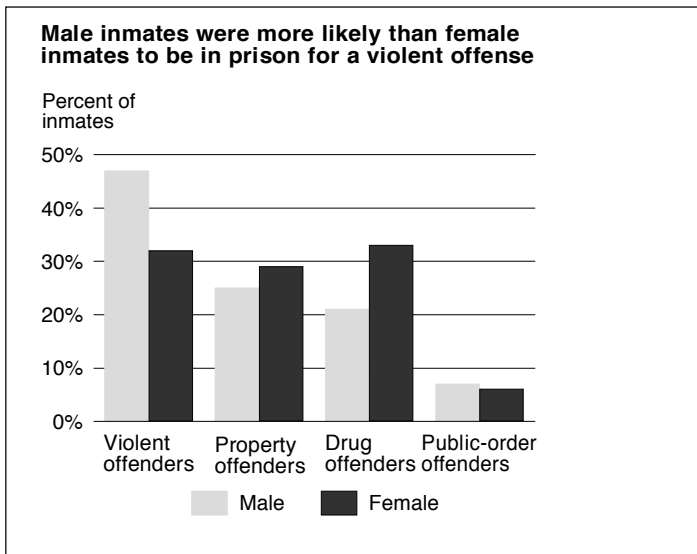


Fig. 3

- Women were about equally likely to be in prison for a violent, a property, or a drug offense.
- 12,600 women were serving a sentence for drug offenses in 1991, a 432%-increase from about 2,400 female inmates serving time for drugs in 1986.
- 137,700 male drug offenders in 1991 represented a 281%-increase from the 36,100 in prison in 1986.
- In 1991 women in prison were more likely than men to be serving time for —
  - homicide (15% versus 12%)
  - larceny (11% versus 5%)
  - fraud (10% versus 2%)
  - drugs (33% versus 21%).
- Men were more likely than women to be in prison for—
  - robbery (15% versus 8%)
  - assault (8% versus 6%)
  - burglary (13% versus 5%).

### In 1991 black and Hispanic inmates were more likely than white inmates to be serving a sentence for a drug offense

- From 1986 to 1991, the number of black inmates serving a sentence for drugs increased 447%, the number of convicted Hispanic drug offenders went up 324%, and the number of whites in prison for drugs grew 115%.

- In 1991, among inmates serving time for a drug offense —

— 77% of whites, 75% of Hispanics, and 85% of blacks had been sentenced in the past to probation or incarceration

— 16% of whites, 15% of Hispanics, and 28% of blacks had served time for a prior violent offense.

### In 1986 and 1991 about half the white inmates were serving time for violent crimes

- The percentage of white inmates serving a sentence for —
  - sexual assault rose, from 11% in 1986 to 15% in 1991
  - robbery declined, from 15% to 10%
  - homicide remained 14%
  - assault remained 7%.

### The percentages of black and Hispanic inmates in prison for violent offenses declined between 1986 and 1991

- The percentage of black inmates serving a sentence for —
  - homicide declined, from 15% to 12%
  - robbery declined, from 26% to 19%.
- The percentage of Hispanic inmates serving a sentence for —
  - homicide declined, from 15% to 11%
  - robbery declined, from 19% to 13%.

### The current offense of white, black, and Hispanic inmates was more likely to be a drug offense in 1991 than in 1986

Most serious offense	Percent of inmates							
	White		Black		Other race		Hispanic	
	1991	1986	1991	1986	1991	1986	1991	1986
Violent	49%	50%	47%	59%	54%	62%	39%	52%
Property	30	36	22	29	28	29	21	26
Drug	12	8	25	7	10	6	33	16
Public-order	8	6	5	4	8	3	8	5
Number	248,705	177,181	321,217	202,872	16,627	11,381	117,632	56,505

See the *Explanatory notes* for definitions of racial and Hispanic-origin categories.

Fig. 4

# Almost 1 in 3 inmates received collateral penalties; about 1 in 11 were sentenced to life in prison or to death

## Fines, restitution, court costs, and participation in drug programs formed part of some sentences

- 11% of all inmates were required to pay a fine.
- 10% were required to pay restitution to the victim.
- 12% were required to pay court costs.
- 6% were required to participate in drug treatment, and 5%, in drug testing.

The type of collateral penalty was linked closely with the type of conviction offense:

- About 1 in 8 inmates convicted of rape or sexual assault were ordered to enroll in a sex offender treatment program.
- About 1 in 5 inmates convicted of a drug offense and 1 in 10 convicted of larceny were required to participate in drug treatment or testing.
- 26% of those convicted of driving while intoxicated and 18% convicted of drug trafficking received a fine.
- 29% of inmates convicted of fraud and 18% of those convicted of burglary or larceny were required to pay restitution to their victims.

## 9% of inmates were sentenced to life in prison or to death

The percentage of inmates sentenced to life or to death was unchanged from 1986. In 1979, 11 % of all inmates had a sentence to life in prison or to death.

The 1986 and 1991 offense distributions of inmates sentenced to life or to death were almost the same:

Offense	1991	1986
Total	100%	100%
Homicide	67	69
Sexual assault	8	7
Robbery	8	8
Kidnaping	4	4
Assault	3	1
Drug trafficking	3	3
Other offenses	7	8

## Black, white, and Hispanic inmates were about equally likely to be serving a sentence to life or to death

Maximum sentence	Percent of inmates		
	White	Black	Hispanic
Total	100.0	100.0%	100.0%
Term of years	90	91.0	92
Life	7	7	7
Life plus additional years	2	1.0	.4
Life without parole	.7	.7	.4
Death	.5	.3	.4

Fig. 6

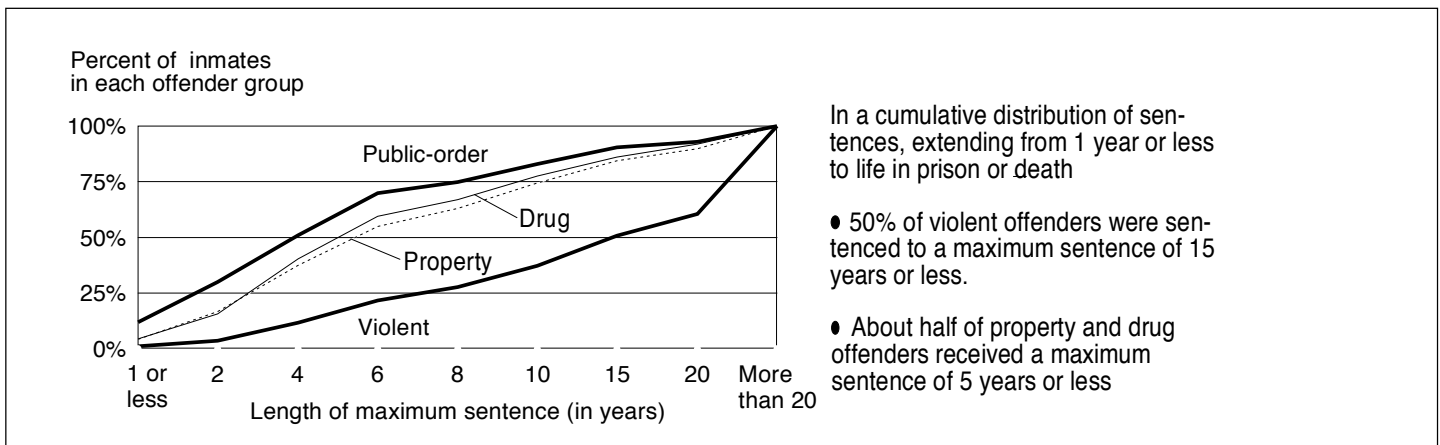
## Inmates with a life sentence generally had an extensive criminal record

- More than half had served time in a correctional facility for a prior offense; a fifth of all inmates with a life sentence had been incarcerated as a juvenile.
- Two-thirds had a prior sentence to probation or incarceration; a third had three or more prior sentences.
- 30% had a past sentence for a violent offense.

Of the estimated 60,000 inmates with a life sentence —  
 — most were men (96%);  
 — half were age 35 or older;  
 — 46% were black, 37% white, 2% other races, and 14% Hispanic.

## Almost 75,000 inmates were serving a sentence for murder

Of this estimated number —  
 44% had received a sentence to a term of years, averaging 32 years  
 41% had received a life sentence  
 11% had received a life sentence plus years  
 3% had been sentenced to death.



In a cumulative distribution of sentences, extending from 1 year or less to life in prison or death

- 50% of violent offenders were sentenced to a maximum sentence of 15 years or less.
- About half of property and drug offenders received a maximum sentence of 5 years or less

Fig. 7

# Half of all inmates had a maximum sentence of 9 years or less and expected to serve just over 3 years in prison

Sentence length and time served in prison reflect the seriousness of the offense

	Sentence length		Time served since admission		Total time expected to serve	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
Total	108 mo	150 mo	17 mo	32 mo	37 mo	66 mo
Violent offenses	180	216	31	49	70	100
Murder	Life	381	69	81	160	178
Manslaughter	156	185	26	39	66	81
Sexual assault	180	211	27	42	66	95
Robbery	144	200	27	41	58	82
Assault	114	158	18	32	43	68
Property offenses	60 mo	114 mo	12 mo	20 mo	26 mo	43 mo
Burglary	96	140	15	24	32	51
Larceny	48	72	9	15	18	34
Drug offenses	60 mo	95 mo	11 mo	16 mo	24 mo	36 mo
Possession	54	81	9	13	20	28
Trafficking	72	104	12	17	26	40
Public-order offenses	48 mo	82 mo	9 mo	16 mo	20 mo	33 mo

Fig. 8

## The distribution of prison sentence lengths in 1991 was similar to that in 1986

Maximum sentence	1986 total	1991			
		Total	White	Black	Hispanic
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
1-24 months	10%	10%	8%	9%	14%
25-60	25	24	23	24	29
61-120	25	23	22	22	25
121 or more	30	34	37	36	24
Life/death	9	9	10	9	8

Fig. 9

- A slightly larger percentage of inmates in 1991 than in 1986 had received a maximum sentence of more than 10 years.
- Sentences for black inmates and white inmates differed little in the aggregate; about a third of each group had a sentence of 5 years or less and nearly half had a sentence of more than 10 years.
- In general, sentences received by Hispanic inmates were shorter than those of black or white inmates, reflecting primarily a larger percentage of drug offenders and a smaller percentage of violent offenders among Hispanic inmates.
- Black and white inmates received similar sentences for similar types of offenses:

Offenses	Median sentence	
	White	Black
Violent	204 mo	192 mo
Property	72	72
Drug	72	60
Public-order	60	54

Fig. 10

## 90% of Inmates knew the date or year when they expected to be released

Inmates reported time in prison since their admission — including jail credits and any previous prison time served on their current sentence — and when they expected to leave prison. From this information two estimates of time served can be calculated: time served since admission and total time expected to be served.

In other data series time served is reported for inmates leaving prison. Estimates of time served based on inmates leaving prison will differ because —

- a higher proportion were sentenced for less serious offenses
- estimates exclude jail credits and prior time served on the current sentence
- some inmates are never released.

- 2% of the inmates did not expect to be released, and 8% could not estimate a release date.

- Half of inmates had served 17 months or less at the time of their interview. Inmates convicted of a violent offense had served a median of 31 months; those convicted of a property offense, 12 months; of a drug offense, 11 months; and a public-order offense, 9 months.

- Half of inmates expected to serve a total of 37 months or less before their release. Overall, the mean total time expected to be served was 5½ years.

# About 4% of State prison inmates were not U.S. citizens

## About 31,300 inmates were aliens

- About 1 in 23 inmates were not U.S. citizens. These aliens were from at least 49 countries in North America, South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia.

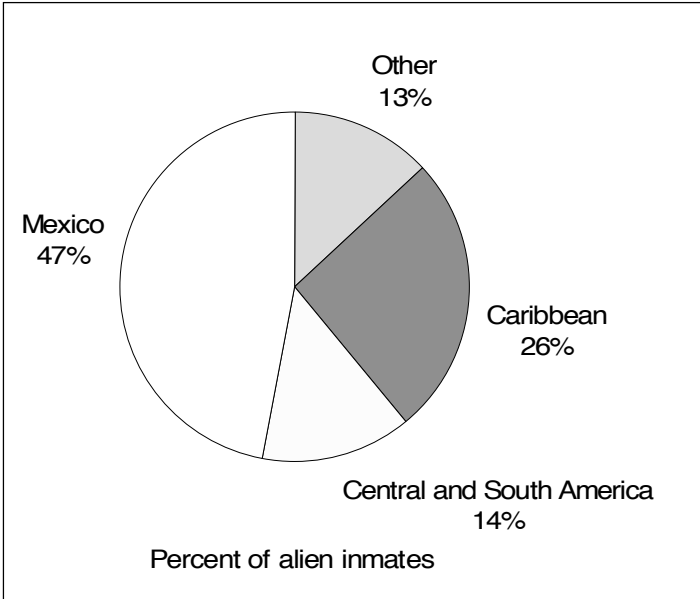


Fig. 11

- Mexicans accounted for about half of the aliens —

County of origin	Percent of alien inmates in State prisons
Mexico	47%
Cuba	10
Dominican Republic	9
Colombia	4
Jamaica	4
El Salvador	4
Guatemala	2
Trinidad and Tobago	2
United Kingdom	1
Vietnam	1
Others	16

## Young, Hispanic men predominated

- Nearly all aliens were male, more than four-fifths were of Hispanic origin, and about half were age 25 to 34.
- About a third of aliens were married, nearly two-thirds had not completed high school, and nearly four-fifths had a job at the time of their current offense.
- Approximately 1 in 10 aliens were non-Hispanic black inmates. About 1 in 25 were non-Hispanic white inmates, and about 1 in 25, Asian-Pacific Islanders.

## About three-fifths of alien inmates had ever used drugs

- About two-fifths of alien inmates used drugs during the month prior to arrest for their current offense, and about a fifth were under the influence of drugs at the time of the offense.

Percent of alien inmates using drugs —	Percent of alien inmates using drugs —	
	In the month before the offense	At the time of the offense
Any drug	38%	22%
Cocaine/crack	25	12
Marijuana	19	6
Heroin/other opiates	10	6
Amphetamines/methamphetamines	2	<1
Hallucinogens	2	1
Barbiturates	1	<1

Fig. 12

- About 14,000 aliens were incarcerated for drug offenses, including 7,900 for trafficking and 6,100 for possession.

- 87% of an estimated 1,400 aliens from Colombia and 67% of an estimated 2,700 aliens from the Dominican Republic were incarcerated for a drug offense.

## Most alien inmates were serving time for drugs (45%) or violence (34%)

- Approximately 10,800 aliens were incarcerated for violent crimes, including homicide, robbery, assault, and sexual assault.

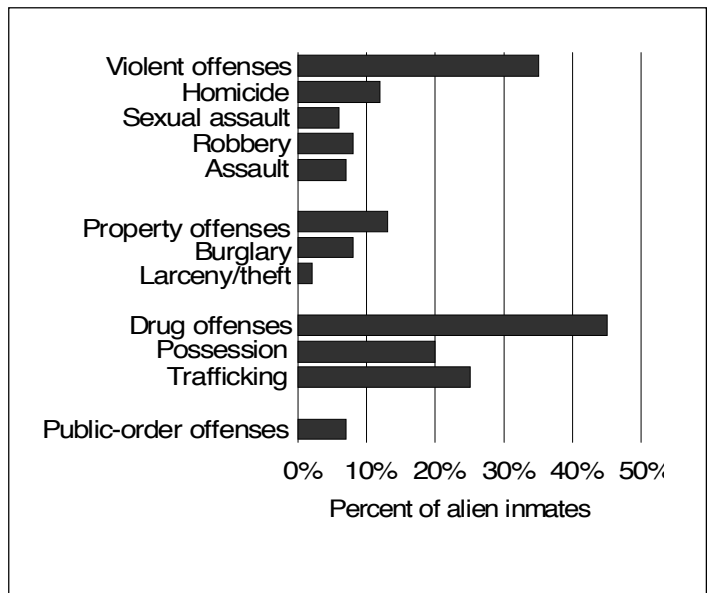


Fig. 13

## Most inmates did not live with both parents while growing up, over 25% had parents who abused drugs or alcohol, and 31% had a brother with a jail or prison record

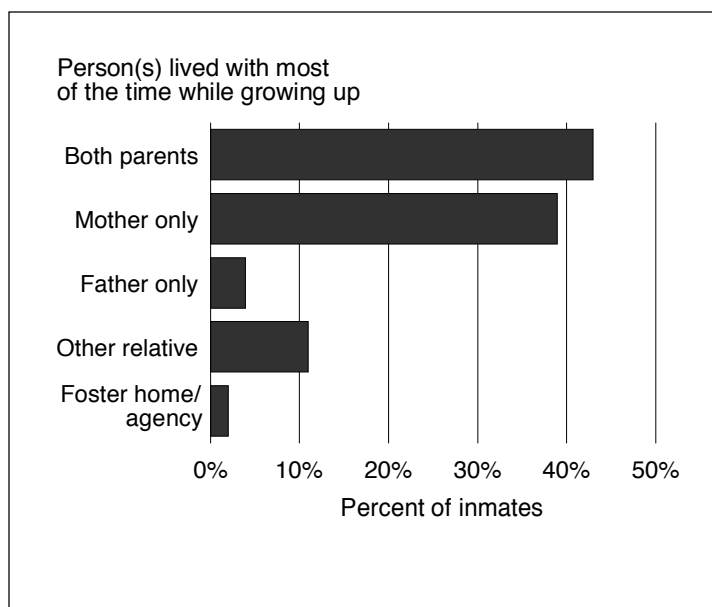


Fig. 14

- Most of the time while growing up, 43% of the inmates lived in a single-parent household: 39% with their mother and 4% with their father.
- 53% of black inmates grew up in single-parent households, compared to 33% of white inmates and 40% of Hispanic inmates.
- An estimated 14% of the inmates had lived in households with neither parent.
- About 17% of the inmates had lived in a foster home, agency, or other institution at some time.

### More than a quarter of inmates reported that their parents or guardians had abused alcohol or drugs

- 26% of inmates reported that their parents or guardians had abused alcohol; 4%, that they had abused drugs.
- Among all inmates, those who had lived with both parents were least likely to report parental/guardian substance abuse (23%). Thirty-seven percent of inmates who lived with their father reported substance abuse in the home, compared to 27% of those who lived with their mother and 34% of those who had other living arrangements.
- 36% of white inmates and 19% of black inmates reported parental alcohol abuse.
- 6% of white inmates and 3% of black inmates reported their parents using drugs.

### More than 4 in 10 female inmates reported they had been physically or sexually abused

- A third of female inmates reported being sexually abused and a third, physically abused, before they entered prison.
- 31% of women in prison had been abused before age 18, and 24% after age 18.
- Female inmates (43%) were at least 3 times more likely than male inmates (12%) to have sustained physical or sexual abuse in their past.

### Inmates who had an immediate family member who was ever incarcerated —

	Percent of inmates			
	All	White	Black	Hispanic
At least one family member	37%	33%	42%	35%
Father	6	8	5	5
Mother	2	2	2	1
Brother	31	26	35	29
Sister	4	4	5	4
Other	1	1	<1	1

Fig. 15

### 37% of inmates had an immediate family member who had served time

- At least 7% of prisoners said a parent had served a jail or prison sentence.
- 31% said their brother had been incarcerated.
- 4% said their sister had been incarcerated.
- Black inmates (42%) were more likely than white (33%) or Hispanic (35%) inmates to report an immediate family member ever being in jail or prison.

## Male and female inmates were parents to more than 826,000 children under age 18

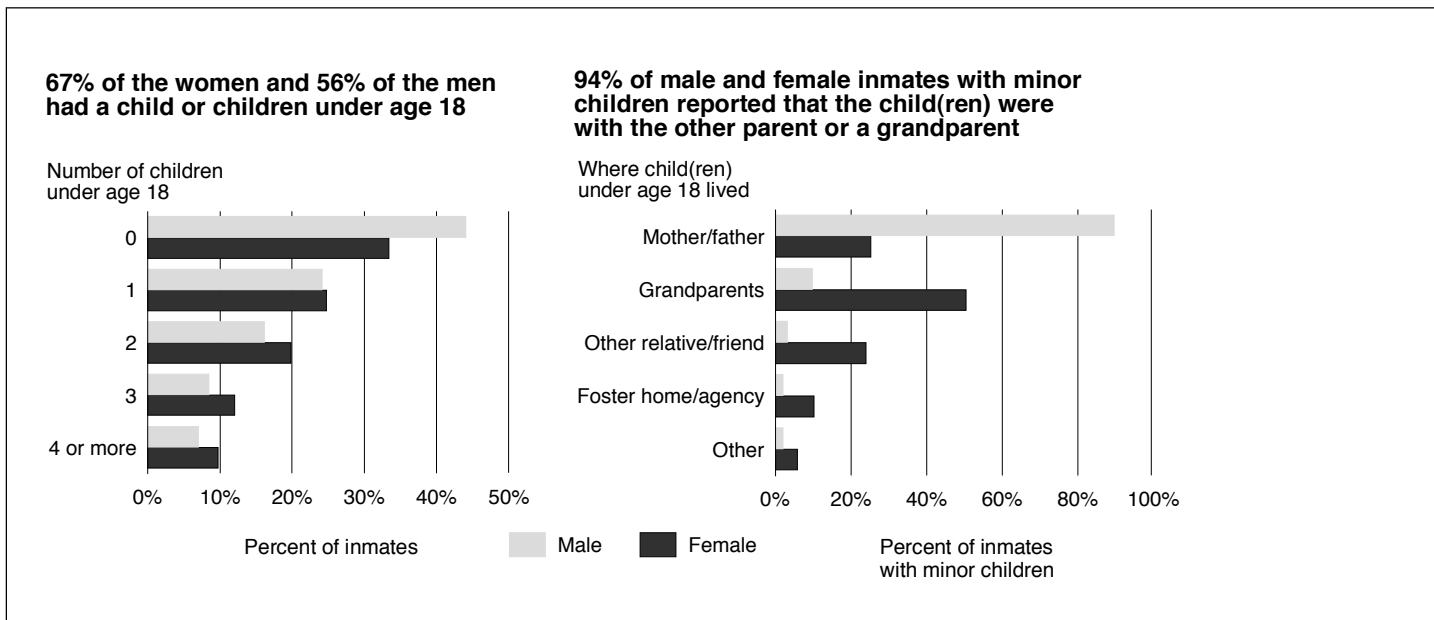


Fig. 16

Fig. 17

### Female inmates were more likely than male inmates to have minor children

- 42% of the women and 32% of the men had 2 or more children under age 18.
- Male inmates had more than 770,000 children under age 18. Female inmates had over 56,000 minor children.

### Before entering prison, women were more likely than men to have lived with their children

- Approximately 7 in 10 female inmates with children under age 18 lived with them prior to being incarcerated, compared to about 5 in 10 male inmates.

### Most inmates' children were living with their other parent or grandparents

- About 90% of the male inmates with children reported that the children currently lived with the children's mother, and 10% said that the children lived with their grandparents. Three percent of male inmates with minor children reported them to be living with other relatives or friends.
- A fourth of female inmates reported having minor children who were living with their father, while more than half said that the children were being cared for by their grandparents. About 24% said that their children now lived with other relatives or friends.

- 10% of the women and 2% of the men said that their children were in a foster home, children's agency, or institution.
- 8% of male inmates and 11% of female inmates had only children over age 18 at the time of the survey.

### 6% of women entered prison pregnant

- An estimated 2,341 of the nearly 39,000 female inmates were pregnant when they entered prison. Eighty-six percent of these women received a gynecological exam related to their pregnancy. The majority of these women (70%) also reported having some form of prenatal care.
- 92% of the women inmates had their last gynecological exam in 1990 or 1991.
- Excluding alcohol and drug treatment, nearly a fourth of the women in prison had received individual or group counseling since their admission. About 5,200 women were receiving counseling at the time of the survey.
- 14% of the female inmates participated in classes dealing with parenting and childrearing.
- About 13% of the women were involved with life skills programs and 33% with religious activities.

# 94% of inmates had been convicted of a violent crime or had a previous sentence to probation or incarceration

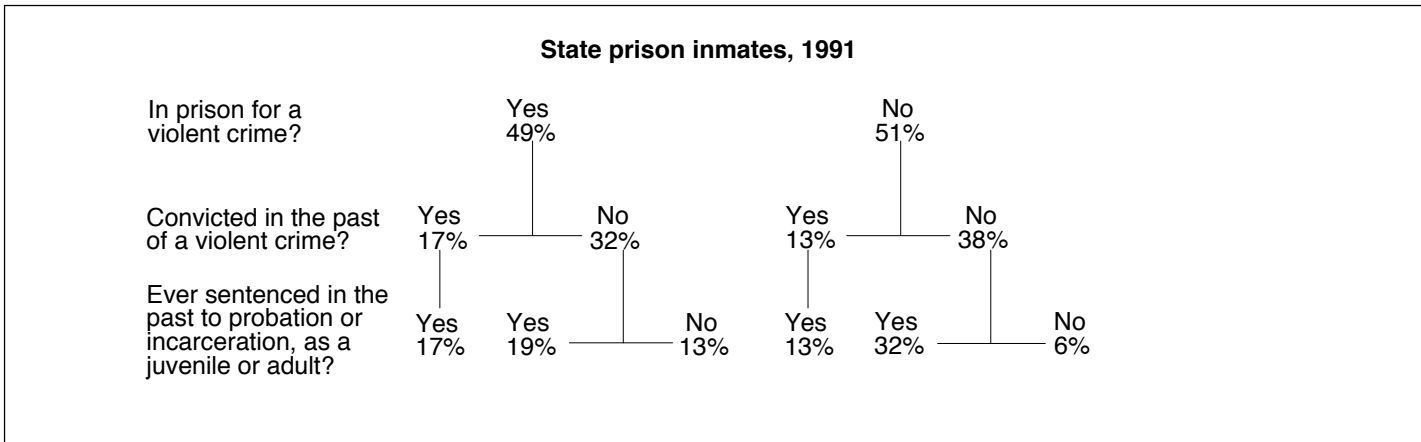


Fig. 18

## Most nonviolent first-time offenders were serving a sentence for a drug offense

Six percent of prisoners were nonviolent offenders with no prior sentence to probation or incarceration. Of these, 42% were in prison for drug trafficking, 19% for drug possession, and 12% for burglary.

The percentage of nonviolent recidivists — inmates whose current and past sentences were for property, drug, or public-order offenses only — rose from 28% of all inmates in 1986 to 32% in 1991. Drug offenders in prison accounted for much of this increase: 18% of nonviolent recidivists were drug offenders in 1986, compared to 38% in 1991.

## Over 60% of inmates in 1991 had been incarcerated in the past

Among prison inmates previously incarcerated, most (91%) had been in jail or prison for an offense within the 5 years before their current offense. About 3%

of the previously incarcerated inmates had remained out of jail or prison for at least 10 years before being arrested for their current offense. About 5% had been incarcerated only as a juvenile in the past.

About 38% of all inmates had not been incarcerated before:

- 19% were sentenced for the first time.
- 19% had received only sentences to probation.

## Few inmates had been sentenced for only minor offenses in the past

One percent of all inmates had been sentenced to probation or incarceration in the past for only minor offenses, including drunkenness, vagrancy, loitering, disorderly conduct, or minor traffic offenses.

In total, 19% of inmates had current and past nonviolent offenses and had —  
 — a record of only minor offenses or  
 — no prior sentences to incarceration, or  
 — no incarceration for at least 10 years before the current offense.

### Inmate surveys provide a unique source of criminal history information

Prisoners reported in detail past sentences to probation or incarceration that they had served as juveniles or adults. The survey's wealth of new information on current and prior sentences, when combined with its other data, provides a striking portrait of who is in prison. This depiction, with its essential element of criminal history, gives an empirical base to examine issues like appropriate punishment and assessment of risk to society.

This survey alone permits detailed research with nationally representative data. Official records are often incomplete, are not easily compared across jurisdictions, and lack crucial personal data.

Characteristic of prior sentences	Percent of all inmates
Total	100%
First sentence	19%
Prior sentence	81%
To probation/incarceration	81
Minor offenses only	1
As a juvenile only	8
To probation only	19
As a juvenile only	5
To incarceration	61
As a juvenile	3
Number of inmates	697,853

# Among inmates, 28% of women and 19% of men, 23% of Hispanics, 20% of whites, and 17% of blacks were serving their first sentence

Current offense or prior sentence to probation or incarceration

	Male	Female		
<b>Serving sentence for violent crime</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>34%</b>	● ◀	
Sentenced in the past	37	18		
For violent crime	18	7		
For nonviolent crime	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	■	
First sentence	13	16		
<b>Serving sentence for nonviolent crime</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>66%</b>		
Sentenced in the past	<b>44</b>	<b>54</b>	●	
For violent crime	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	◀	
For nonviolent crime	<b>31</b>	<b>46</b>	■	
First sentence	6	12		
	White	Black	Hispanic	
<b>Serving sentence for violent crime</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>40%</b>	◀
Sentenced in the past	37	38	28	
For violent crime	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	●
For nonviolent crime	21	18	15	
First sentence	15	11	12	
<b>Serving sentence for nonviolent crime</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>60%</b>	
Sentenced in the past	43	45	49	
For violent crime	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	◀ ●
For nonviolent crime	33	30	38	
First sentence	5	6	11	

● A higher percentage of male (94%) than female (88%) inmates either were serving a sentence for a violent offense or had served a prior sentence to probation or incarceration.

◀ A higher percentage of male (63%) than female (42%) inmates either were serving a sentence for a violent offense or had served a prior sentence for a violent offense

■ A lower percentage of male (50%) than female (57%) inmates had served a prior sentence for a nonviolent offense.

◀ About the same percentage of non-Hispanic white (62%) and black (64%) inmates had either a current or prior sentence for a violent offense. A lower percentage of Hispanic inmates (51%) than of non-Hispanics had a current or prior sentence for violence.

● A lower percentage of white (26%) than black (35%) inmates had served a prior sentence for a violent offense. Of Hispanic prisoners, 24% had been previously sentenced for a violent offense.

Fig. 19



# 4 in 5 inmates sentenced for the first time were in prison for drug trafficking or a violent offense

Current offense	No prior offenses	Recidivists	
		Prior violent offenses	No prior violent offenses
All offenses	100 %	100 %	100%
Violent offenses	65 %	55 %	35%
Homicide	23	10	10
Sexual assault	18	9	6
Robbery	13	22	11
Assault	8	11	6
Other violent	2	2	2
Property offenses	10 %	22 %	32%
Burglary	4	11	16
Larceny	2	4	6
Other property	4	7	10
Drug offenses	22 %	16 %	24%
Possession	7	6	9
Trafficking	15	10	15
Public-order offenses	3 %	7 %	8%

Fig. 20

Prior sentence	Percent of inmates	
	1991	1986
Probation		
None	33%	34%
Juvenile only	15	18
Adult only	34	28
Both	18	20
Incarceration		
None	40%	37%
Juvenile only	4	7
Adult only	40	38
Both	16	19
Probation or incarceration		
None	20%	18%
Juvenile only	8	11
Adult only	41	36
Both	31	36

Fig. 21

- Violent offenders made up 65% of inmates with no prior record and 42% of prisoners with a prior sentence to probation, prison, or jail.

- Almost a quarter of inmates without a prior record were serving time for homicide. Over a fifth were in prison for a drug offense.

### More than half the inmates who had served time in the past for a violent offense were serving a current sentence for violence

- 1 in 5 violent recidivists were in prison for robbery.
- 28% of recidivists and 10% of prisoners with no prior offense were in prison for a property offense.
- 57% of recidivists who had not served time for a violent offense were currently in prison for a property or a drug crime. One in four recidivists with no prior violent offense were serving a sentence for a drug offense, and 1 in 6 for burglary.

### 80% of inmates had earlier been sentenced to probation or incarceration

- About two-thirds of inmates had been on probation and three-fifths had been incarcerated previously.
- About 4 in 10 prison inmates had been convicted before as a juvenile and 7 in 10 as an adult.
- Similar percentages of inmates in 1991 and 1986 had served past sentences to probation or incarceration.

### 45% of prison inmates had 3 or more prior sentences to probation or incarceration

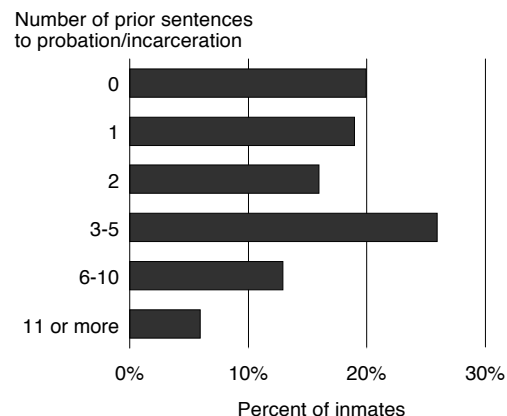


Fig. 22

# 88% of the inmates on probation or parole before entering prison were arrested for a new offense

Among the 44% of inmates who were on parole or probation before admission to prison —



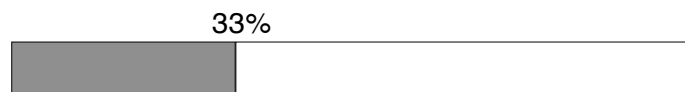
were arrested for a new offense other than a probation or parole violation



entered prison sentenced for a new offense



had been supervised in the community following a prison term



were arrested for a violent crime while under community supervision



had been on probation or parole for a violent crime

Why the previous probation or parole was formally revoked	
The inmate was arrested for or convicted of a new offense and/or the inmate had failed to —	74%
pass a drug test	5%
report for drug testing or treatment	3.0
report for alcohol treatment	1.0
report to counseling	1.0
report to probation or parole officer	***
obtain permission to leave jurisdiction	6.0
secure or keep employment	1.0
pay fines, restitution, or other obligations	4.0
break contacts with known offenders	1.0
meet other requirements of the supervised release to the community	***

Of all inmates entering prison —

- 53% had no existing criminal justice status when they were arrested for their current offense.
- 39% were under supervision in the community while on probation or parole, which was formally revoked.
- 5% were on probation or parole and were sentenced for a new offense but reported no formal revocation.
- 3% returned from escape or were in another status.

**Parole revocations** Among inmates who entered prison after parole was formally revoked —

32% had been in prison for a violent offense.

32% had their supervision revoked after an arrest or conviction for a new violent offense.

Half had served 18 months or less in prison before their release and had been on parole 8 months or less.

**Probation revocations** Among those entering prison after official revocation of probation —

18% had been on probation for a violent offense.

30% were currently serving time in prison for a violent offense.

Half had been on probation 5 months or less before their admission to prison.

**On average, inmates who received a new sentence after revocation of parole or probation had a shorter sentence than other inmates**

Most serious offense	No criminal justice status at time of offense	Median sentence		
		On probation or parole before return to prison		
		Revocation of		
		Probation with new sentence	Parole with new sentence	Parole without new sentence
All	120 mo	72 mo	108 mo	60 mo
Violent	216	125	216	120
Property	72	60	84	60
Drugs	72	60	60	36
Public-order	60	54	48	30

Fig. 23

The median sentence of those returned to prison after formal revocation of parole and without a new sentence was 60 months, half the 120-month median sentence of persons having no criminal justice status at the time of their offense.

# Violent inmates were most likely to have victimized one person who was male, adult, and of the same race as the inmate

## 23% of violent inmates had victimized more than one person

Violent offense	Percent of violent inmates		
	1 victim	2 victims	3 or more victims
All	77%	13%	10%
Homicide	85	10	5
Sexual assault	81	12	7
Robbery	65	18	17
Assault	79	13	8

Fig. 24

- More than a third of all robbers reported victimizing two or more persons in the crime that led to their current sentence.
- Overall, the 328,000 violent inmates had more than 610,000 victims. An estimated 299,000 victims of violence were robbed (49%); 112,000 were killed in a homicide (18%); 94,500, assaulted (15%); and 90,000, raped or sexually assaulted (14%).

## Among violent inmates, 62% of the men and 70% of the women had victimized men

Sex of victim(s)	Percent of violent inmates	
	Male	Female
Male	50%	61%
Female	39	31
Mixed	12	9

Fig. 25

- Among violent male inmates who victimized a female, 46% raped or sexually assaulted her, 22% robbed her, and 17% killed her.
- Among women in prison who victimized a male, 58% killed their victim, 18% robbed him, and 18% assaulted him.

## 1 In 5 violent inmates had victimized a minor

Age of victim(s)	Percent of violent inmates whose current age was			
	Under age 25	25-34	35-44	Age 45 or older
Minor	12%	14%	20%	33%
Adult	85	83	77	65
Mixed	3	2	3	2

Fig. 26

- Inmates age 45 or older and serving time for a violent crime were more than twice as likely as violent inmates under age 25 to have victimized a minor.
- Among inmates who had committed a violent offense against a minor, 79% had raped or sexually assaulted their victim.

## 89% of white and 53% of black violent inmates had victimized someone of their own race

Race/Hispanic origin of victim(s)	Percent of violent inmates			
	White	Black	Other	Hispanic
White	89%	33%	50%	33%
Black	3	53	11	10
Other	2	2	20	3
Hispanic	4	6	9	49
Mixed	2	5	10	5

Fig. 27

- Black (47%) and Hispanic (51%) violent inmates were at least 4 times more likely than white (11%) violent inmates to have victimized someone of a different race or ethnic group.
- Among violent inmates who had victimized someone of a different race or ethnic group, 47% had committed robbery and 20%, homicide.

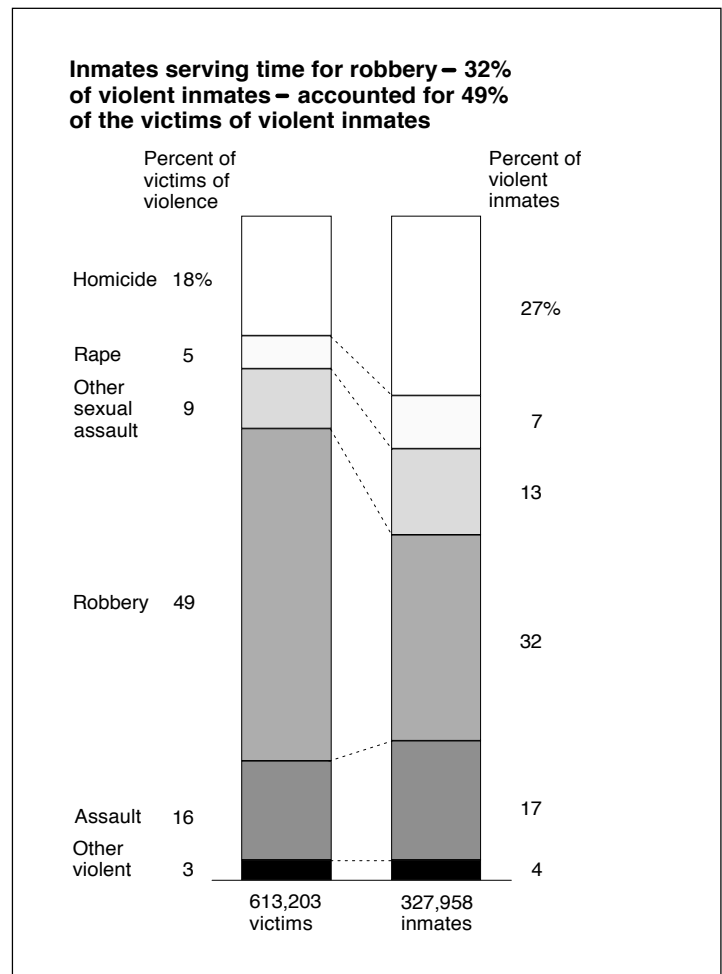


Fig. 28

## 32% of inmates sentenced for a violent offense had victimized relative, intimate, or person whom they knew well

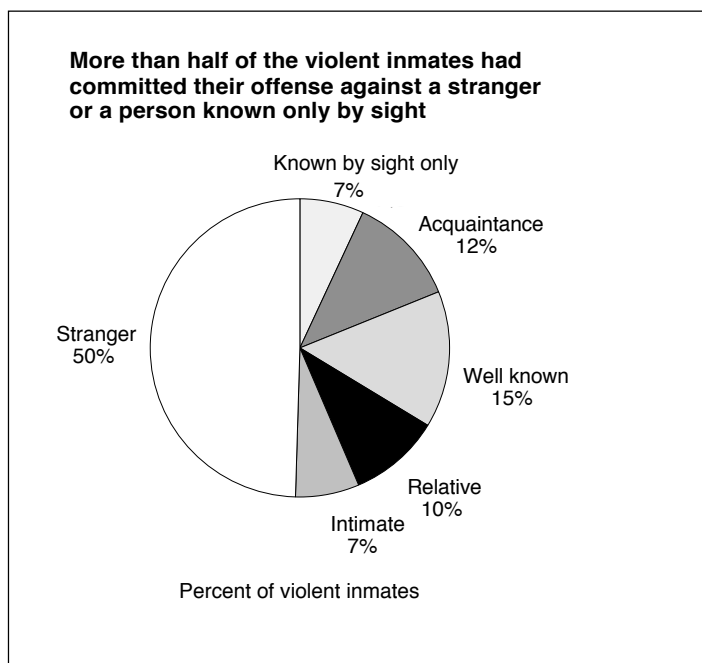


Fig. 29

### Among violent inmates, women (36%) were more likely than men (16%) to have victimized a relative or intimate

Relationship of inmates to their victims	Percent of violent inmates	
	Male	Female
Close	16%	36%
Intimate	7	20
Relative	10	16
Known	33%	29%
Well known	15	14
Acquaintance	12	11
By sight only	7	4
Stranger	51%	35%

Fig. 30

- Among inmates sentenced for a violent offense, women (48%) were nearly twice as likely as men (26%) to have committed a homicide. Nearly half of these women had murdered a relative or intimate.
- 21% of violent male prisoners had committed a rape or other sexual assault; 38% of the sex offenders had assaulted a relative or intimate.
- More than 80% of both men and women in prison for robbery had victimized a stranger or a person known by sight only.
- Among inmates in prison for assault, 44% of the men, compared to 30% of the women, had victimized a stranger.

### White inmates were about twice as likely as black and Hispanic inmates to have victimized a relative or intimate

Relationship of inmates to their victims	Percent of violent inmates			
	White	Black	Other	Hispanic
Close	26%	11%	24%	12%
Known	35	33	28	29
Stranger	39	56	48	59

Fig. 31

### Nearly a quarter of white inmates in prison for homicide had killed a relative or intimate

Among inmates, by race or ethnicity and offense, percent who victimized a relative or intimate

Offense	Race or ethnicity of inmates			
	White	Black	Other	Hispanic
Homicide	23%	12%	26%	13%
Sexual	46	26	44	31
Robbery	1	1	3	1
Assault	22	17	20	12

Fig. 32

- Among those who had committed rape or other sexual assault, black (26%) inmates were less likely than white (46%) inmates to have victimized a relative or intimate.

### 35% of violent inmates who committed their offense at age 45 or older had victimized a relative or intimate

Among inmates, by inmate's age and offense, percent who victimized a relative or intimate

Offense	Age of inmate at time of offense			
	24 or younger	25-34	35-44	45 or older
All offenses	9%	18%	32%	35%
Homicide	10	19	33	31
Sexual assault	28	35	54	46
Robbery	1	2	2	4
Assault	8	25	25	32

Fig. 33

- Overall, inmates age 45 or older at the time of their offense were about 4 times as likely as those under age 25 to have victimized a relative or intimate.
- In contrast, the younger the inmate at the time of the offense, the greater the likelihood of victimizing a stranger. More than 60% of violent inmates under age 25 when they committed their offense victimized a stranger, compared to fewer than 50% of those age 25 to 34, 35% of those age 35 to 44, and 23% age 45 or older.

## Two-thirds of violent inmates had killed, raped, or injured their victims

Type of injury to the victim	Percent of violent inmates			
	All offenses	Sexual assault	Robbery	Assault
Any injury	66.8%	100.0%	16.8%	71.6%
Death	28	.2	.5	.9
Rape/sexual assault	21	100.0	.4	1
Knife or bullet wound	8	1.0	5.0	35
Broken bones and other internal injuries	3	1	3	12
Knocked unconscious	2	.6	2	7
Minor bruises and cuts	9	8	8.0	22
Other	2	4.0	2.0	5

Except for offenses in which victims died, more than one type of injury could be reported.

Fig. 34

- 28% of the violent inmates said they had killed their victims; 21% had raped or sexually assaulted them; 11% had inflicted major injuries, such as knife or bullet wounds, broken bones, and other internal injuries, or had knocked them out; and 5% had caused only minor injuries, such as bruises, cuts, scratches or a black eye.
- Among inmates convicted of rape, 80% reported no specific injuries in addition to raping or sexually assaulting their victims. Fewer than 5% reported they had wounded or inflicted any other major injury on their rape victims.
- More than half of all inmates in prison for assault had sexually assaulted or inflicted a major injury on their victims.
- Of all types of violent inmates, robbers were the least likely to have injured their victims. About 1 in 6 robbers had injured their victims, and 1 in 10 had inflicted a major injury.

### The type of injury varied by sex, race, and age of inmate

- Overall, female violent inmates (76%) were somewhat more likely than male inmates (66%) to have injured their victims. Among violent —

#### Female inmates

50% had killed their victims  
5% had sexually assaulted them  
13% had inflicted a major injury

#### Male inmates

28%  
22%  
11%.

- Among violent inmates, a higher percentage of whites (76%) than blacks (60%) or Hispanics (63%) injured their victims. These differences largely reflect the higher percentage of white inmates (33%) who raped or sexually assaulted their victims compared to black (14%) or Hispanic inmates (16%).
- Inmates age 45 or older when they committed the offense were about 3 times as likely as those under age 25 to have sexually assaulted their victims.

### 42% of violent inmates committed their offense at home or in their victim's home

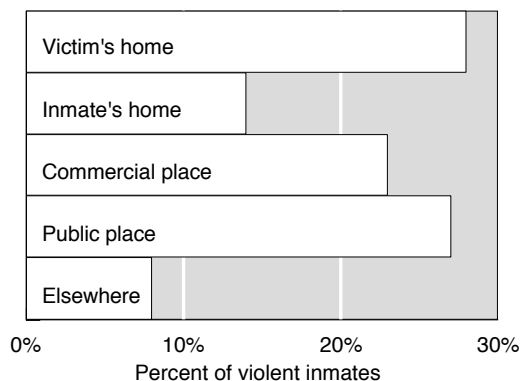


Fig. 35

### Where the offense took place differed by type of crime--

- 48% of the robbers in prison committed the robbery in a commercial establishment; 32%, in a public place, such as a park, street, parking lot, or school.
- 44% of the inmates convicted of rape or sexual assault committed the crime in the victim's home; 32%, in the inmate's home.
- 34% of the inmates convicted of homicide killed their victims in the victim's home; 29%, in a public place.
- 35% of the inmates convicted of assault attacked their victims in a public place; 24%, in the victim's home.

## 46% of violent inmates carried or used a weapon when they committed the offense

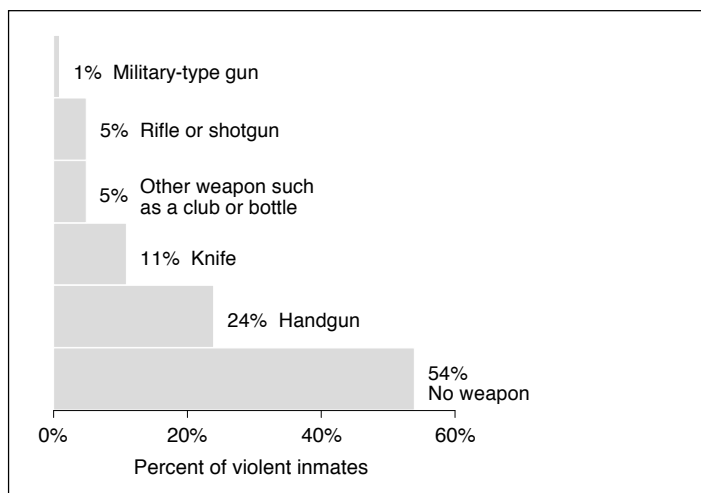


Fig. 36

An estimated 2,100 inmates, representing fewer than 1% of all violent inmates, were armed with a military-type weapon, such as an Uzi, AK-47, AR-15, or M-16.

Weapon use was strongly related to the inmate's age when the offense occurred. Weapons were carried or used by —

- 52% of inmates age 24 or younger
- 44% of those age 25 to 34
- 39%, age 35 to 44
- 33%, age 45 or older.

Weapon use did not vary significantly between the sexes or among racial and ethnic groups. Among violent inmates, the same percentage (46%) of men and women carried a weapon. White inmates (43%) were about as likely as black inmates (47%) and Hispanic inmates (48%) to have been armed.

About two-thirds of all armed violent inmates carried guns. Of these, 56% actually fired their gun when they committed the offense.

### More than half of the inmates who committed murder, robbery, or assault carried a weapon

Current offense	Percent of violent inmates			
	Any weapon	Gun	Knife	Other weapon
Murder	64%	45%	14%	5%
Negligent manslaughter	47	32	12	3
Rape	17	5	10	2
Other sexual assault	6	2	3	1
Robbery	51	36	10	5
Assault	57	33	16	8

Fig. 37

### Inmates armed with a gun differed little from those with a knife in how they used their weapon

How weapon was used	Percent of violent armed inmates		
	Gun	Knife	Other weapon
To kill the victim	14%	15%	11%
To injure the victim	11	18	23
To scare the victim	54	51	43
For protection	30	29	27
To get away	12	14	15
Other reasons	6	5	6
Not used	8	9	11

Fig. 38

### Most inmates who carried a weapon while committing the crime used it

- More than 90% of the violent inmates who carried a weapon actually used it to commit the offense.
- Among inmates who had a weapon at the time of the offense —
  - 52% used it to scare the victim
  - 14%, to injure the victim
  - 14%, to kill the victim.
- 29% of the violent inmates who carried a weapon used it for self-protection; 13% used it to get away after committing the crime.

### 61% of violent inmates said that they or their victims were drinking or using drugs at the time of the crime

Violent offense	Percent of inmates reporting that they or their victims were under the influence of alcohol or drugs at time of the offense		
	Inmate	Victim	Inmate or victim
All	50%	30%	61%
Homicide	52	46	70
Sexual assault	42	19	47
Robbery	52	19	61
Assault	50	42	68

Fig. 39

- 30% of the violent inmates said their victims were under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Homicide and assault were the crimes for which the largest percentage of inmates reported drug or alcohol use by the victim or themselves at the time of the offense.

# 1 in 6 inmates committed their offense armed with a gun, and half of them fired it

Type of firearm	Percent of inmates			
	Ever owned or possessed	Owned or possessed in month before arrest	Armed when committing current offense	Fired during current offense
Any firearm	43%	24%	16%	8%
Handgun	34	18	13	6
Rifle or shotgun	29	12	3	2
Military-type	8	3	<1	<1
Other	7	<1	<1	0

Fig. 40

## Handguns were the most commonly owned and used firearm

More than 40% of all inmates reported they had owned or possessed a firearm at some time in their lives. While 34% of the inmates owned a handgun, 29% owned a rifle or shotgun, and 8% a military-type weapon. Sixteen percent of all inmates admitted to using or having a gun while committing their current offense — 13% a handgun, 3% a rifle or shotgun and 1% a military-type weapon.

## 36% of inmates convicted of homicide, robbery, or assault were armed with a gun

- 42% of the inmates who committed a homicide were armed with a gun, while 36% fired the gun.
- 34% of the robbers were armed, while 6% fired the gun.
- 31% of the inmates who committed an assault were armed, while 25% fired the gun.

Inmates who had committed sexual assault, property, drug, or public-order offenses (excluding weapons violations) were the least likely to be armed (less than 5%) or to fire a gun (1% or less).

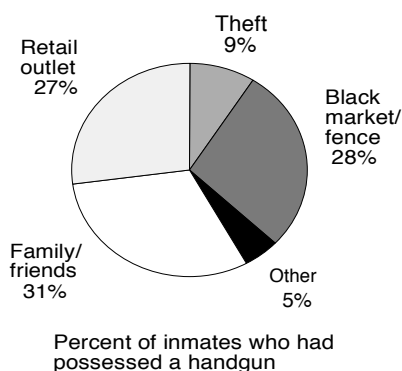
## More than a fifth of the inmates reported ever having or using a gun while committing a crime

When asked about using guns in the past, 23% of the inmates said they had committed at least one crime with a firearm — 19% had used a handgun, 5% a shotgun or rifle, and 1% a military-type weapon. Half of the inmates who had ever possessed a firearm, had used a firearm to commit a crime.

Male inmates (23%) were more likely than female inmates (12%) to have used or possessed a gun in a crime.

Relatively fewer Hispanic inmates (18%) than white (22%) or black (25%) inmates said they had a gun while committing a crime.

## 10% of inmates had stolen at least one gun, and 11% had sold or traded stolen guns



## Among those inmates who had possessed a handgun, 37% had most recently acquired the weapon through theft or an illegal market.

- 28% got the gun from the black market, a drug dealer, or a fence.
- 9% stole the handgun from a retail outlet, a friend, or a family member, or in a burglary.
- 31% got the handgun from family or friends.

## More than a quarter of the inmates had bought the handgun at a retail outlet.

Fig. 41

## 6% of inmates belonged to a gang before entering prison

***Criminal gangs, as this report defines them, are groups that commit illegal acts and have 5 or 6 of these characteristics...***

- Formal membership with a required initiation or rules for members
- A recognized leader or certain members whom others follow
- Common clothing (such as jackets, caps, scarves or bandannas), or group colors, symbols, tattoos, or special language
- A group name
- Members from the same neighborhood, street, or school
- Turf or territory where the group is known and where group activities usually take place

### Comparing gang members to inmates whose group of friends had no gang characteristics other than committing offenses together

Of gang members —	Of non-gang inmates —
92% reported that their gang fought other groups	26% said their group of friends fought others
69% indicated they manufactured, imported, or sold drugs as a group	37% said their group of friends committed drug offenses together
63% reported stealing motor vehicles or their parts with other gang members	24% said they and their friends helped one another to steal motor vehicles or parts
58% had broken into homes or other buildings as a gang activity	29% said they had broken into buildings while with a group of friends

About 6% of inmates belonged to groups that engaged in illegal activities and that had five or six gang characteristics. (See the above box.) Another 6% engaged in illegal activities with groups that had three or four gang characteristics. Seventy percent of inmates did not participate in illegal activities while with groups of friends having one or more gang characteristics

Number of gang characteristics	Number in group	Percent of all inmates
5-6	44,400	6%
3-4	39,200	6
2	39,600	6
1	87,000	12
0	165,000	23
Not in a group that committed illegal acts	330,400	47%

Fig. 42

### Half of the gang members in prison reported their gangs' having 60 or more members —

Number of gang characteristics	Number of members	
	Median	Mean
5-6	60	143
3-4	20	82
2	10	24
1	6	12

Fig. 43

### Among inmates who were gang members—

- On average, they had joined a gang at age 14.
- Half belonged for 36 months or more and belonged at the time they were arrested for their current offense.
- 32% were still members.
- 19% reported other members' being involved in their current offense.
- 91% had served at least one previous sentence either in an institution or on probation, and 73% had served or were serving time for a violent offense.

### 49% or more of the gang members committed robberies, stole cars and auto parts, shoplifted, and sold drugs while in a group

Number of gang characteristics	Percent of inmates who while in a group									
	Used drugs	Destroyed or damaged property	Fought other groups	Shop-lifted	Stole motor vehicles or parts	Sold stolen property	Broke in and entered	Sold drugs	Robbed	Other
5-6	81%	58%	92%	50%	63%	68%	58%	69%	49%	12%
3-4	76	46	80	44	49	53	47	58	38	8
1-2	79	36	50	40	37	47	41	48	23	5
0	82	22	26	32	24	32	29	37	13	3

Fig. 44



# Compared to 1986, inmates reported increased use of cocaine or crack and decreased use of marijuana

## Half of all inmates in 1991 had used cocaine in some form

Thirty-two percent had used cocaine or crack on a regular basis, compared to 22% in 1986.

Percent of inmates who reported —

	Ever used		Used regularly	
	1991	1986	1991	1986
Any drug	79%	80%	62%	63%
Marijuana	74	76	52	55
Cocaine/crack	50	44	32	22
Herion/other opiates	25	26	15	18

Fig. 45

About a quarter of the inmates in 1991 said they had used cocaine or crack in the month before the offense, compared to a fifth of inmates in 1986. About 14% committed their offense under the influence of cocaine or crack in 1991, up from 10%.

The percentage of inmates using marijuana in the month before the offense decreased from 46% in 1986 to 32% in 1991. Eleven percent of inmates were under the influence of marijuana at the time of the offense in 1991, compared to 18% in 1986.

About 80% of inmates in both 1986 and 1991 reported ever using a drug, and 62% reported regular use of a drug at some time in their lives.

## Inmates in 1991 were less likely than those in 1986 to have used drugs in the month before or at the time of the offense

Type of drug	Percent of inmates using drugs			
	In the month before the offense		At the time of the offense	
	1991	1986	1991	1986
Any drug	50%	56%	31%	36%
Marijuana	32	46	11	18
Cocaine/crack	25	20	14	10
Heroin/opiates*	10	11	6	7
Stimulants*	4	9	1	4
Barbiturates*	8	10	3	4
Hallucinogens*	4	7	2	3

\*For components of drug categories, see page 30.

Fig. 46

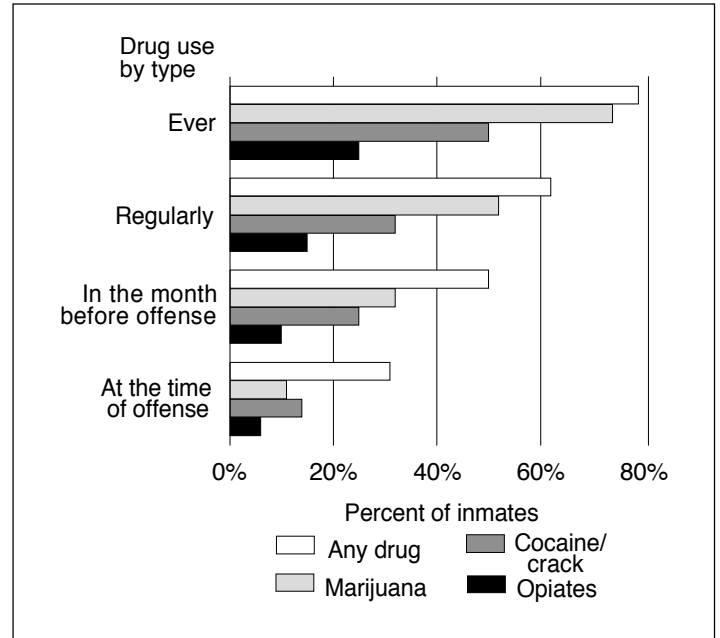


Fig. 47

About the same proportion of inmates in 1986 and 1991 reported using heroin or other opiates. In the month before the offense for which they were sentenced, about 1 in 10 had used heroin or other opiates, and about 1 in 16 had committed the offense under the influence of these drugs.

## Marijuana was still the most commonly used drug

Inmates in 1991 were more likely to have used marijuana than any other drug. More than half reported using marijuana on a regular basis, and a third had used marijuana in the month before the offense. One in five inmates reported using marijuana daily in the month before their offense.

## About 14% of inmates committed their offense under the influence of cocaine or crack

Sixteen percent of inmates were daily users of cocaine or crack in the month before their offense —

- 12% were using cocaine and 7% were using crack.

Inmates were twice as likely to report using cocaine as to report using crack —

- For the month before the offense, 20% reported cocaine use and 10% reported crack use.
- At the time of the offense, 10% were under the influence of cocaine and 5% were under the influence of crack.

# 31 % of inmates committed their offense under the influence of drugs, and 17% committed their offense to get money for drugs

## Drug use was common among inmates serving time for burglary, robbery, or drug offenses

Among inmates serving a sentence for burglary or robbery, about 6 in 10 inmates had used drugs in the month before the arrest for the current offense, and about 4 in 10 were under the influence at the time of the offense.

Overall, violent and public-order offenders were less likely than property offenders to have used drugs in the month before their offense and to have committed their current offense under the influence of drugs. For violent offenders using drugs in the month before their offense, only inmates convicted of robbery had about the same percentage of drug use as property offenders. Among inmates in prison for violent offenses other than robbery, those sentenced for sexual assault (20%), assault (23%), or homicide (28%) were less likely than property offenders (35%) to have committed their offense under the influence.

## Money for drugs motivated more than a quarter of the inmates sentenced for robbery, burglary, or larceny

Twenty-seven percent of inmates in prison for robbery and 30% of those serving time for burglary reported committing their offense to get money for drugs. About 25% of inmates in prison for drug trafficking reported money for drugs as a motive.

Current offense	Percent of inmates who Committed offense		
	Used drugs in the month before the offense	Under the influence of drugs	To get money for drugs
All offenses	50 %	31 %	17 %
<b>Violent offenses</b>	<b>46 %</b>	<b>28 %</b>	<b>12 %</b>
Homicide	43	28	5
Sexual assault	31	20	2
Robbery	59	38	27
Assault	42	23	6
<b>Property offenses</b>	<b>54 %</b>	<b>35 %</b>	<b>26 %</b>
Burglary	59	40	30
Larceny	54	38	31
<b>Drug offenses</b>	<b>60 %</b>	<b>37 %</b>	<b>22 %</b>
Possession	61	38	16
Trafficking	59	36	25
<b>Public-order offenses</b>	<b>35 %</b>	<b>18 %</b>	<b>5 %</b>

Fig. 48

## Inmates' drug use varied according to prisoner characteristics

Characteristic	Percent of inmates who Committed offense		
	Used drugs in the month before the offense	Under the influence of drugs	To get money for drugs
All inmates	50 %	31 %	17 %
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	50 %	31 %	16 %
Female	54 %	36 %	24 %
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>			
White	49 %	32 %	15 %
Black	49	29	17
Hispanic	54	34	20
<b>Age</b>			
17 or younger	51 %	22 %	9 %
18-24	52	31	16
25-29	55	34	18
30-34	56	37	21
35-44	48	30	17
45-54	28	15	10
55 or older	9	6	3

Fig. 49

## Compared to men in prison, women had used drugs and had committed crimes to buy drugs relatively more often

Female inmates were more likely than male inmates to have used drugs in the month before the offense (54% versus 50%) and to have been under the influence at the time of the offense (36% versus 31%).

Nearly 1 in 4 women in prison reported committing their crimes to obtain money for drugs compared to about 1 in 6 men.

## By most measures, Hispanic inmates had higher rates of drug use than non-Hispanic inmates

Hispanic inmates were more likely than other inmates to have used drugs in the month prior to the offense (54% compared to 49%). While Hispanic (34%) and white (32%) inmates were almost equally likely to have been under the influence at the time of the offense, black inmates were less likely (29%).

Twenty percent of Hispanic inmates reported getting money for drugs as a reason for committing their crimes, compared to 15% of white inmates and 17% of black inmates.

## Female inmates were more likely than male inmates — and black inmates more likely than white inmates — to have used crack

Crack users identified among the inmates may have used other drugs, including powder cocaine, in the month before their offense. Powder cocaine users may have used other drugs but not crack. Users of other drugs had not used crack or cocaine.

- 19% of women in prison had used crack in the month before the offense, compared to 10% of the men. About equal percentages of female and male inmates used powder cocaine.
- 14% of black inmates, compared to 6% of white inmates, had used crack. For black inmates, cocaine users accounted for the same percentage as crack users.
- Hispanic inmates of all races were more likely than non-Hispanic inmates to have used cocaine powder (21% versus 14%).

Characteristic	Percent of inmates who in the month before the offense used				No drug
	Total	Crack	Powder cocaine	Another drug	
<b>All offenders</b>	100%	10%	15%	25%	50%
<b>Sex</b>					
Male	100%	10%	15%	25%	50%
Female	100	19	17	18	46
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>					
White	100%	6%	14%	29%	51%
Black	100	14	14	21	51
Other	100	5	14	29	52
Hispanic	100	8	21	25	46
<b>Age</b>					
18-24	100%	10%	13%	29%	48%
25-29	100	12	16	27	45
30-34	100	13	18	26	44
35-44	100	8	16	23	52
45 or older	100	3	8	10	78

Fig. 51

Characteristic	Percent of inmates who in the month before the offense used			
	Crack	Powder cocaine	Another drug	No drug
<b>Current offense</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Violent offenses</b>	33%	39%	48%	51%
Homicide	5	10	14	14
Sexual assault	4	5	7	13
Robbery	19	17	17	12
Assault	5	6	8	10
<b>Property offenses</b>	31%	25%	26%	23%
Burglary	16	14	14	10
Larceny	7	6	5	4
<b>Drug offenses</b>	32%	30%	20%	17%
Possession	12	11	7	6
Trafficking	20	18	12	11
<b>Public-order offenses</b>	4%	5%	5%	9%
<b>Committed current offense for money for drugs</b>	55%	43%	20%	...

Fig. 50

• Inmates who had used crack in the month before their offense were less likely to be in prison for a violent offense than those who had used other drugs or no drug.

• About a third of the crack users were in prison for a violent offense, slightly less than a third for a property offense, and about a third for a drug offense.

• The percentage of crack users indicating that they had committed their offense to get money for drugs (55%) was over 2½ times the percentage of users of drugs other than cocaine or crack (20%).

## A third of all inmates had participated in a drug treatment program after entering prison

### Among inmates ever treated for drug dependency, most who had used drugs within a month before the offense had been treated since admission

Almost half of the inmates who had used a drug during the month before their current offense had participated in drug treatment after receiving their current sentence. This treatment ranged from intensive in-patient programs, through individual or group counseling with a professional, to self-help groups or drug awareness training. One in five inmates who had used drugs in the month before their offense were in a treatment program at the time of the interview.

Among inmates who had used drugs during the month before their offense, 31% had been in a treatment program before entering prison, 25% had been in such a program once or twice, and 6%, three or more times. A 10th of these inmates were in a treatment program during the month they committed their offense.

### 36% of all inmates received their most recent treatment for drugs in jail or prison

Over 5 in 10 inmates who had ever used drugs had received treatment for drug addiction; for over 4 in 10 of these inmates, the most recent treatment was while they were incarcerated.

### Professionals had provided individual drug counseling to 5% of inmates who used drugs in the month before their offense and had led drug treatment groups for 27%

Group counseling, conducted by professionals or by peers in a self-help program, was the most frequent type of drug treatment program in prison.

Drug treatment program	Percent of inmates who		
	All	Used drugs Even in the past	Used drugs In the month before offense
Participated			
Ever	43%	55%	62%
After admission	33%	41%	48%
Before admission	21%	26%	31%
Times			
1	12	16	18
2	5	6	7
3-5	3	4	5
6 or more	1	1	1
Participated in the month before the current admission	7%	8%	10%
Most recent participation was while incarcerated	36%	45%	51%
Participating at the time of the survey	13%	17%	20%

Categories of participation before and after admission include inmates who participated during both periods.

Fig. 52

After admission, 22% of all inmates had participated in group counseling and 8% had been in self-help counseling groups. Of the inmates who used drugs in the month before their offense, after entering prison 32% had been in group counseling and 12%, in self-help groups. (See page 34 for program categories.)

In-patient drug treatment programs had treated 7% of all inmates and 11% of the recent drug users.

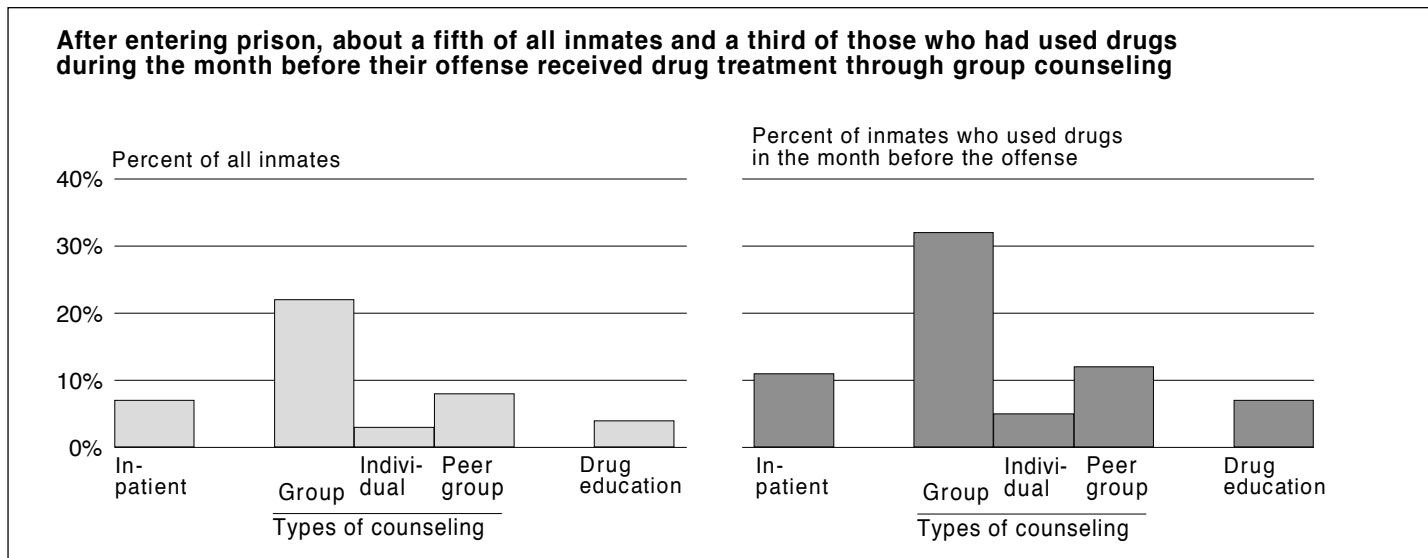


Fig. 53

## 2.2% of inmates who reported the results of the test for the virus that causes AIDS said they were HIV-positive

51.2% of all inmates had ever been tested for the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and reported the results

Inmates	Percent of inmates tested for HIV and reporting the results	
	Total	HIV-positive
All	51.2%	2.2%
Male	50	2
Female	67	3
White	52.6%	1.1%
Black	52	3
Other	51	.9
Hispanic	46.0	4
Male		
White	51.7%	1.0%
Black	51	3
Hispanic	45	4
Female		
White	68.2%	1.9%
Black	67	4
Hispanic	63	7

Fig. 54

Among all inmates —

- 51.2% reported HIV-test results
- 32.2 had never been tested
- 9.0 did not know if they had been tested
- 7.5 had been tested but did not know the results
- .1 refused to report whether they had been tested or refused to report the test results.

Of those inmates who were ever tested for the presence of HIV and who reported the results —

- Women (3.3%) were more likely than men (2.1%) to test HIV-positive.
- 3.7% of Hispanic inmates and 2.6% of black inmates tested HIV-positive, compared to 1.1% of white inmates.
- Hispanic men (3.5%) were more likely than white men (1.0%) to test HIV-positive. HIV-positive tests accounted for 2.5% of the black men who had ever tested and who reported the outcome.
- Hispanic women (6.8%) had higher HIV-positive rates than white women (1.9%). Black women had a positive rate of 3.5%.

Of all prison inmates, 55.9% said they had been tested after the most recent admission.

Drug users and needle users had higher positive rates than other inmates

- For inmates reporting test results, 2.5% of drug users, compared to 0.8% of other inmates, reported that they tested HIV-positive.
- The percentage of HIV-positive was higher among inmates who —
  - used drugs in the month before their offense (2.8%),
  - used needles to inject drugs intravenously (4.9%),
  - and shared needles with other drug users (7.1%).

### A quarter of inmates had used a needle to inject drugs

	Percent of inmates who		
	All	Even used drugs	Used drugs in the month before the offense
Ever injected a drug for nonmedical purposes	25%	31%	40%
Type of drug			
Heroin/other opiate	17	22	28
Cocaine	16	21	28
Crank (methamphetamine)	6	8	11
Other	4	5	7
Ever shared a needle	12%	15%	20%

Fig. 55

- 40% of inmates who used drugs in the month before their offense had in the past used a needle to inject drugs.
- 1 in 6 inmates used a needle to inject heroin or other opiates, and 1 in 6, to inject cocaine.
- More than 10% of all inmates and 20% of users in the month before their offense had shared a needle.

## 32% of inmates committed their offense under the influence of alcohol

**Inmates sentenced for violent or property offenses were the most likely to have been under the influence of both drugs and alcohol at the time of the offense**

Current offense	Percent of inmates under the influence		
	Alcohol only	Drugs only	Both
All offenses	18%	17%	14%
Violent offenses	21%	12%	16%
Homicide	25	10	17
Sexual assault	22	5	14
Robbery	15	19	18
Assault	27	8	14
Property offenses	18%	21%	14%
Drug offense	8%	26%	10%
Public-order offenses	31%	10%	9%
DWI	70	3	8
Other public-order	20	11	10

Fig. 56

- Slightly more than two-fifths of inmates convicted of homicide or assault committed their current offense under the influence of alcohol or of alcohol with drugs.
- About a third of inmates convicted of robbery or a property offense were under the influence of alcohol at the time of their current offense. Inmates serving a sentence for a drug offense (18%) were the least likely to be using alcohol at the time of their offense.

**Relatively fewer inmates in 1991 than in 1986 committed their current offense under the influence of alcohol or drugs**

Under the influence at the time of the offense	Percent of inmates	
	1991	1986
Total	49%	54%
Alcohol only	18	18
Drugs only	17	17
Both alcohol and drugs	14	18

Fig. 57

- 49% of inmates were under the influence in 1991; 54% in 1986. Most of this decline resulted from a decreased percentage using both alcohol and drugs.

**Drinking inmates had consumed an average of nearly 9 ounces of ethanol before their offense**

- The pattern of drinking — the amount drunk and the amount of time spent drinking — did not differ widely among the major offender groups.

	Average amount of ethanol drunk before current offense
Total	8.7ozs.
Violent	9
Property	9
Drugs	6
Public-order	8

- 9 ounces of ethanol is equivalent to about three six-packs of beer or 2 quarts of wine.

- About half the inmates under the influence at the time of the offense had been drinking 6 hours or more.

Daily drinking for all inmates during the year before the current offense was more likely among —  
 — male (29%) than female (19%)  
 — white (34%) than black (25%) or Hispanic (25%)  
 — divorced (31%) or never married (29%) than married (25%) inmates.

**About half of daily drinkers had ever participated in an alcohol-abuse program**

- 38% of all drinkers had participated in an alcohol-abuse program in their lifetimes, including —  
 48% of the daily drinkers,  
 35% of those who drank at least once a week, and  
 25% of those who drank less than once a week.

- 35% of the daily drinkers had participated in more than one alcohol program, compared to 28% of the weekly drinkers and 24% of those who drank less frequently than every week.

- Since their admission to prison, about 18% of all drinkers had joined alcohol-related groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Al-Anon.

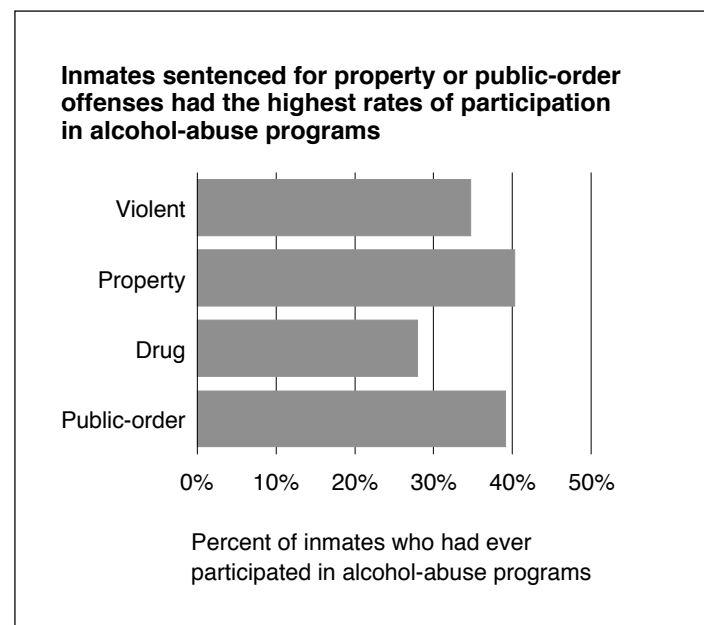


Fig. 58

# Nearly all inmates had participated in work, education, or other programs since their admission to prison

Participation in prison activities and programs involved three-fourths or more of all inmates, regardless of sex, race, Hispanic origin, or offense

	Percent of inmates who	
	Had participated in a program or activity after admission	Were currently participating in a program or activity
All inmates		
Men	91%	80%
Women	93	84
White	91%	81%
Black	91	80
Other race	94	81
Hispanic	89	76
Violent	93%	82%
Property	90	78
Drugs	90	79
Public-order	85	77

Fig. 59

Nearly half of all inmates had received academic education, and about a third, vocational training since entering prison

Type and level of training	Men	Women
Academic		
Basic <9th grade	5%	5%
High school	26	24
College	12	12
Other	2	3
Vocational	31%	31%

Fig. 60

Bible clubs and other religious activities attracted the most inmate participation

Activity	Percent of inmates who had participated after admission
Religious	32%
Self-improvement	20
Counseling	17
Pre-release	8
Arts and crafts	7
Outside community	3
Ethnic or racial	2

• Self-help programs — such as for parenting, job searching, and problem resolution — (20%) and individual or group counseling other than alcohol or drug-related programs (17%) were the next most popular programs.

• About 2% of the inmates reported joining an ethnic or racial organization such as the NAACP, the African American Black Culture Group, the Hispanic Committee, Aztlan, or Lakota.

About 7 in 10 inmates had work assignments

	Percent of inmates
Work assignments	69%
General janitorial	13
Food preparation	13
Maintenance, repair, or construction	9
Grounds and road maintenance	8
Library, barbershop, office or other service	8
Goods production	4
Farming, forestry, or ranching	4
Laundry	3
Hospital or medical	1
Other	12
No work assignment	31%

Inmates could report more than one work assignment.

• About 10% of all inmates were assigned jobs outside the prison grounds, including 3% who performed grounds or road maintenance.

• Prisoners were assigned to work assignments an average of 32 hours per week, including 67% who were occupied between 20 and 44 hours.

Hours per week	Percent of inmates with work assignments
>7 hours	6%
7-19	8
20-34	19
35-44	27
45-84	9
Not assigned a job	31%

About 68% of all inmates with work assignments were paid money, including 77% of those with production jobs

Type of work	Of all inmates	Percent Of working inmates paid		Average pay per hour
		Money	Nonmonetary compensation	
All	69%	68%	43%	\$ .56
Goods production	4%	77%	49%	\$.84
Other work	65%	67%	43%	\$.54
On site	57	66	44	0.38
Off site	8	72	38	1.81

Fig. 61

• The average wage was \$0.56 per hour.

• About 43% of inmates with work assignments received compensation other than money, such as good-time credit and extra privileges.

# Maximum security housing held 26% of all inmates; medium security, 49%; and minimum security, 23%

**Inmates in maximum security were nearly twice as likely as those in minimum security to be serving a sentence for a violent offense**

Percent of inmates, for each housing security level

**Current offense**

	Maximum	Medium	Minimum
Violent	62%	45%	34%
Property	19	25	31
Drugs	14	22	29
Public-order	5	8	7

**Prior sentences**

	Maximum	Medium	Minimum
No prior sentences	20%	20%	18%
Nonviolent current	5	7	9
Violent current	15	13	9
Recidivists	80%	80%	82%
Nonviolent only	21	32	43
Prior violent only	10	14	12
Current violent only	23	19	15
Current and prior violent	26	16	12

Fig. 62

Minimum-security housing was more likely than maximum security to be holding inmates sentenced for a drug offense.

The security classification of inmates' housing had little association with whether or not inmates had a prior record; however, *whether or not inmates had been convicted of a violent offense* was linked to the current housing arrangements.

- About 4 in 5 inmates in maximum, medium, or minimum security facilities had prior sentences to probation or incarceration.
- Maximum-security housing was more likely than other housing to hold prisoners with a history of sentences for violent offenses: 74% in maximum security had a current or prior sentence for a violent offense, compared to 62% in medium security and 48% in minimum security.

**State prisons in the South accounted for 39% of inmates; in the West, 22%; the Midwest, 21%; and the Northeast, 18%**

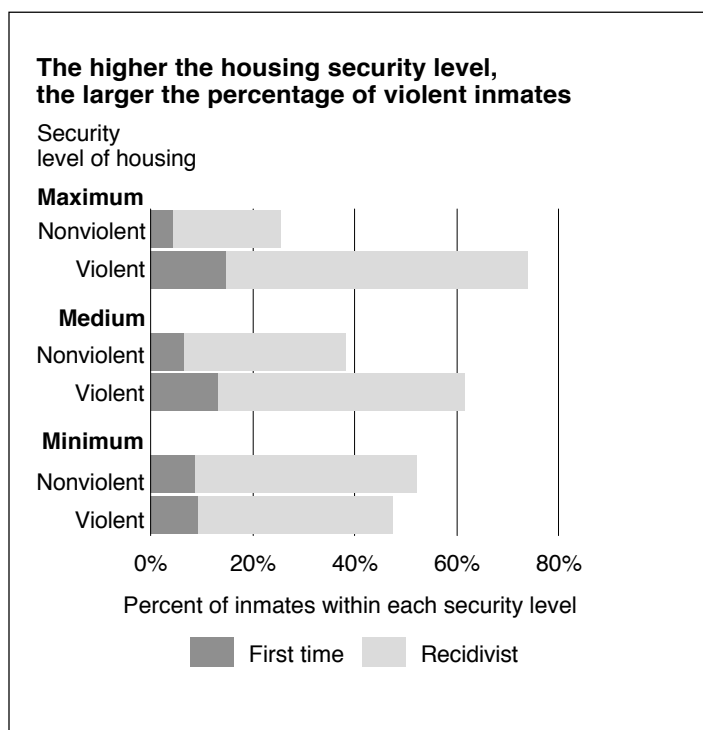


Fig. 63

Percent of inmates, within region

	North-east	Midwest	South	West
<b>Current offense</b>				
Violent	48%	51%	46%	42%
Property	16	27	27	26
Drugs	30	16	20	23
Public-order	6	6	7	10
<b>Prior sentences</b>				
No prior sentences	23 %	20%	20%	14%
Nonviolent current	10	6	6	5
Violent current	13	14	14	9
Recidivists	77%	80%	80%	86%
Nonviolent only	27	29	33	36
Prior violent only	13	11	12	15
Current violent only	16	22	19	18
Current and prior violent	22	17	16	17

Fig. 64

• Inmates in the Northeast were more likely than Midwestern inmates to be serving time for a drug offense.

• Inmates in the Northeast were the most likely to have had no prior convictions, while those in Western States were the most likely to be recidivists.



**Methodology**

The 1991 Survey of Inmates in State Correctional Facilities was conducted for the Bureau of Justice Statistics by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Through personal interviews during June, July, and August 1991, data were collected on individual characteristics of prison inmates, current offenses and sentences, characteristics of victims, criminal histories, family background, gun possession and use, prior drug and alcohol use and treatment, educational programs and other services provided while in prison, and other personal characteristics. Similar surveys of State prison inmates were conducted in 1974, 1979, and 1986.

**Sample design**

The sample for the 1991 survey was selected from a universe of 1,239 State prisons that were enumerated in the 1990 Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities or had been opened after completion of the census. The sample design was a stratified two-stage selection.

In the first stage correctional facilities were separated into two sampling frames: one for prisons with male inmates and one for prisons with female inmates. Prisons holding both sexes were included on both lists. Within each frame, prisons were stratified into eight strata defined by census region (Northeast, Midwest, South, and West) and facility type (confinement and community-based). All prisons with 1,950 or more men were selected from the male frame; and all prisons with 380 or more women were selected from the female frame. The remaining prisons in the male frame were grouped into equal size strata of approximately 2,600 males and then stratified by security level (maximum, medium, minimum, and unclassified). The remaining prisons in the female frame were also grouped into strata of approximately 574 females. A systematic sample of prisons was then selected within strata on each frame with probabilities proportional to the size of each prison. Overall, a total of 277 prisons were selected.

In the second stage interviewers visited each selected facility and systematically selected a sample of male and female inmates using predetermined procedures. As a result, approximately 1 of every 52 male inmates and 1 of every 11 female inmates were selected. A total of 13,986 interviews were completed, yielding an overall response rate of 93.7%.

Based on the completed interviews, estimates for the entire population were developed using weighting factors derived from the original probability of selection in the sample. These factors were adjusted for variable rates of nonresponse across strata and inmate characteristics. Further adjustments were made to control the survey estimates to midyear 1991 custody counts projected from data obtained in the National Prisoner Statistics series (NPS-1).

**Accuracy of the estimates**

The accuracy of the estimates presented in this report depends on two types of error: sampling and nonsampling. Sampling error is the variation that may occur by chance because a sample rather than a complete enumeration of the population was conducted. Nonsampling error can be attributed to many sources, such as non-response, differences in the interpretation of questions among inmates, recall difficulties, and processing errors. In any survey the full extent of the non-sampling error is never known. The sampling error, as measured by an estimated standard error, varies by the size of the estimate and the size of the base population. Estimates of the standard errors have been calculated for the 1991 survey. (See appendix table.) These estimates may be used to construct confidence intervals around percentages in this report. For example, the 95-percent confidence interval around the percentage of inmates who were in prison for a drug offense is approximately 21.4% plus or minus 1.96 times 0.5% (or 20.4% to 22.4%).

These standard errors may also be used to test the significance of the difference between two sample statistics by pooling the standard errors of the two sample estimates. For example, the standard error of the difference between black and white inmates in the percent in prison for drug offenses would be 1.1% (or the square root of the sum of the squared standard errors for each group). The 95-percent confidence interval around the difference would be 1.96 times 1.1% (or 2.2%). Since the difference of 12.9% (24.9% minus 12.0%) is greater than 2.2%, the difference would be considered statistically significant.

All comparisons discussed in this report were statistically significant at the 95-percent confidence level. To test the significance of comparisons not mentioned in the report, use percentages in text or tables and, when available, base numbers in the explanatory notes. The standard errors reported below should be used only for tests on all inmates. Comparisons of male and female inmates require different standard errors.

**Appendix table. Standard errors of the estimated percentages, State prison inmates, 1991**

Base of the estimate	Estimated percentages					
	98 or 2	95 or 5	90 or 10	80 or 20	70 or 30	50
1,000	4.9	7.7	10.6	14.1	16.2	17.7
5,000	2.2	3.4	4.7	6.3	7.2	7.9
10,000	1.6	2.4	3.4	4.5	5.1	5.6
25,000	1.0	1.5	2.1	2.8	3.2	3.5
50,000	0.7	1.1	1.5	2.0	2.3	2.5
100,000	0.5	0.8	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.8
200,000	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.0	1.1	1.2
400,000	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.9
600,000	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.7
711,643	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.7

## Definitions

### Drugs

The categories for drugs used without a prescription include the following:

<i>Marijuana:</i>	marijuana and hashish
<i>Cocaine/crack</i>	
<i>Heroin/opiates;</i>	heroin, opiates, and methadone
<i>Barbiturates:</i>	barbiturates and Quaaludes or downers
<i>Stimulants:</i>	amphetamines and methamphetamines
Hallucinogens:	LSD, PCP, and other hallucinogens

Other drugs not categorized above included those such as designer drugs. About 3.5% of the inmates reported ever using these drugs.

### Offenses

Figure 1 groups the offenses that inmates reported in 5 summary categories and 20 specific offense types. Most tables present the four summary categories — violent offenses, property offenses, drug offenses, and public-order offenses — but where more detail is needed, the summary categories with eight specific offenses are presented.

In the reduced list of offenses, *homicide* includes murder and manslaughter.

Also in the reduced list, *sexual assault* includes rape and sexual assault. Sexual assault contains assaults against women, children, and men.

*Public-order* offenses include escape from custody, weapons offenses, driving while intoxicated, morals and decency, and commercialized vice.

Usually *other violent*, *other property*, *other drug*, and *other public-order* offense categories are not presented separately, because they account for a small proportion of the overall categories.

*Other violent* includes extortion, hit-and-run driving, and criminal endangerment.

*Other property* includes destruction of property, trespassing, and possession of burglary tools.

*Other drug* includes forged prescriptions, possession of drug paraphernalia, and unspecified drug violations.

*Other public-order* includes driving while Intoxicated, escape from custody, regulatory violations, and commercialized vice.

*Most serious offense* Inmates who were sentenced for more than one offense are categorized by the offense for which they received the longest sentence.

*Current offense* This was the most serious offense for which the inmate was serving a sentence.

*Prior offense* The offenses for which an inmate was sentenced before the current offense.

### Race and Hispanic origin

The three categories presented for race — white, black, and other — include only inmates describing themselves as non-Hispanic. Inmates with Asian, Native American, or Pacific Islander heritage were categorized as *other* because their small number would not permit a more detailed listing. Inmates who indicated that they were Hispanic included persons of all races.

Where statistics for Hispanic inmates are reported with statistics for white or black inmates, the categories do not overlap. Hispanic inmates are compared to non-Hispanic white and black inmates.

*Black or white inmates* These inmates identified the race to which they belonged and reported having no Hispanic background.

*Hispanic inmates* These inmates, of any race, reported having a Hispanic background.

### Sentences and time in prison

*Collateral penalty* This is an additional obligation that a court places on an incarcerated defendant. Such penalties include fines, restitution to a victim, and participation in a treatment program.

*Maximum sentence* Inmates sentenced to a span of time, as in 5-to-15 years, are categorized by the maximum amount of time that they could serve.

*Time served* The estimate of the time served is calculated from the day of admission for the current sentence to the day of the interview, excluding any time the inmate was released. Inmates also reported the date when they expected to be released. When the reported date of release lacked the specific day or month, the 15th day or June was assigned.

**Types of Inmates**

- First-time inmates* Before their current conviction, these persons had never been sentenced to probation or incarceration, as a juvenile or adult.
- Nonviolent inmates* This category includes all inmates who were not serving time for any violent offense.
- Recidivists* These inmates had been convicted in the past as a juvenile or an adult and had served a previous sentence to probation or incarceration.
- Violent inmates* These inmates were serving time for a violent offense. In discussions of recidivism, violent inmates were those who had ever been convicted of a violent offense.

**Notes by page**

In many tables the detail may not add to the total or to a subtotal because of rounding.

**Page 3** The weighted totals of inmates reporting valid data in 1991 are —  
 711,643 for sex, race, Hispanic origin, and age  
 703,735 for marital status  
 710,546 for veteran status  
 706,173 for education  
 706,945 for work before arrest, and  
 521,765 for income.

**Page 4** Figure 1 presents the total number of inmates, by offense.

Figure 2 presents the total number of women and men for summary categories of offenses. Standard errors on variables distributed between male and female inmates cannot be calculated using the appendix table.

**Page 5** Figure 3. Male inmates were more likely to be serving a sentence for a violent offense than for other offenses.

Most serious offense	Percent of inmates	
	Male	Female
Violent	47%	32%
Property	25	29
Drug	21	33
Public-order	7	6

Figure 4 presents the total number of inmates by race and Hispanic origin, distributed among the summary categories of offenses.

**Page 6** Figure 5. In 1991 an estimated 62,904 inmates had a sentence to life in prison or to death.

Figure 6. An estimated 246,636 white inmates, 315,861 black inmates, and 115,590 Hispanic inmates provided valid data on sentence length.

Figure 7.

	Cumulative percent of inmates			
	Violent	Property	Drug	Public-order
1 year or less	1.0%	4.4%	4.5%	12.0%
2 year	3.7	16.8	15.8	30.1
4	11.7	37.5	40.3	51.1
6	21.6	55.1	59.3	69.9
8	27.6	63.1	67.0	74.9
10	37.4	74.4	77.7	83.0
15	50.7	84.5	86.1	90.5
20	60.5	90.0	92.0	93.1
More than 20 years	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	323,064	171,446	146,803	46,590

A cumulative percentage is one that at each level includes the subtotal from the lower or earlier categories. In the graph for figure 9, for example, a reader can see where the line for violent inmates crosses the 10-year mark and that about 37% of inmates sentenced for a violent crime had a maximum sentence of 10 years or less.

**Page 7** Figure 8.

Most serious offense	Number of inmates reporting sentence length	
	Median	Mean
Total	690,721	627,522
Violent offenses	323,064	265,932
Murder	73,838	32,432
Manslaughter	12,642	12,302
Sexual assault	65,830	60,461
Robbery	102,642	97,357
Assault	56,313	54,247
Property offenses	171,446	169,822
Burglary	86,237	84,948
Larceny	33,265	33,242
Drug offenses	146,803	143,041
Possession	51,925	50,315
Trafficking	91,690	89,716
Public-order offenses	46,590	45,994

Most serious offense	Number of inmates reporting time served to interview (median and mean)
	Total
Violent offenses	318,366
Murder	71,634
Manslaughter	12,693
Sexual assault	64,884
Robbery	101,686
Assault	55,664
Property offenses	169,052
Burglary	84,759
Larceny	33,118
Drug offenses	145,654
Possession	51,731
Trafficking	90,777
Public-order offenses	46,727

**Explanatory notes** continued

Most serious offense	Number of inmates reporting time to release	
	Median	Mean
Total	608,836	606,357
Violent offenses	272,796	271,453
Murder	51,287	50,766
Manslaughter	11,184	11,184
Sexual assault	58,182	58,016
Robbery	92,587	92,397
Assault	49,975	49,691
Property offenses	156,731	155,994
Burglary	78,249	77,983
Larceny	30,477	30,300
Drug offenses	134,101	133,874
Possession	47,138	47,138
Trafficking	84,172	83,945
Public-order offenses	42,899	42,738

Inmates reporting that they expected to be released on or before the year 2066 were included in the calculation of the mean time expected to be served.

Figure 9.

	Number of inmates reporting sentence length
1986	443,726
1991	697,596
White	247,516
Black	317,881
Hispanic	115,791

Figure 10.

Offense	Median sentence	
	White	Black
Violent	120,422	149,003
Property	74,144	69,210
Drug	29,129	78,412
Public-order	20,021	16,584

**Page 8** Figure 11. The percentages noted on the chart are rounded.

Mexico	47.1%
Caribbean	26.3
Central and South America	14.0
Other	12.6
Number	31,287

Figure 12.

Drug	Number of alien inmates reporting whether they had used drugs in the time	
	More than once	At the time
Cocaine/crack	27,465	23,433
Marijuana	29,055	25,266
Heroin/other opiates	29,154	27,985
Amphetamines/methamphetamines	30,920	30,468
Hallucinogens	30,829	30,556
Barbiturates	30,932	30,750

Figure 13.

Most serious offense	Percent of alien inmates
Violent offenses	34.5 %
Homicide	11.9
Sexual assault	6.0
Robbery	8.2
Assault	6.8
Property offenses	13.0 %
Burglary	7.9
Larceny	2.3
Drug offenses	45.3 %
Possession	19.7
Trafficking	25.3
Public-order offenses	6.5
Number	31,287

**Page 9** Figure 14.

Persons lived with most of the time while growing up	Percent of inmates
Both parents	43%
Mother only	39
Father only	4
Other relative	11
Foster home/agency	2
Other	1
Number	711,643

Figure 15. The number of white Inmates reporting whether or not family members had been incarcerated was 250,337; black inmates, 321,038; and Hispanic inmates, 117,594.

**Page 10** Figure 16. 67% of the women and 56% of the men had a child or children under age 18.

Number of children under age 18	Percent of inmates	
	Male	Female
None	44.1%	33.5%
1	24.2	24.8
2	16.2	19.9
3	8.5	12.1
4 or more	7.1	9.8

Figure 17. 94% of male and female inmates reported that the child(ren) were with the other parent or a grandparent.

With whom children under age 18 lived	Percent of inmates with minor children	
	Male	Female
Mother/father	89.7%	25.4%
Grandparents	9.9	50.6
Other relative/friend	3.3	24.0
Foster home/agency	2.1	10.3
Other	2.1	6.0

Inmates could report more than one category of caregivers for their children.

**Page 11** Figure 18. An estimated 697,853 inmates reported valid data on recidivism.

**Page 12** Figure 19. Among inmates with valid information on current and prior sentences, 28% of 38,117 women and 19% of 659,736 men, 22% of 116,280 Hispanics, 20% of 247,019 whites, and 17% of 318,025 blacks were serving their first sentence.

**Page 13** Figure 20. The number of inmates reporting current offense and that they had no prior offenses was 134,131; that they had been convicted of a violent offense in the past, 209,315; and that they had not been convicted of a violent offense in the past, 354,407.

Figure 21.

	Number of inmates reporting	
	1991	1986
Probation	703,187	446,988
Incarceration	707,055	439,980
Combined	699,059	436,770

Figure 22. 45% of prison inmates had 3 or more prior sentences to probation or incarceration.

Number of prior sentences to probation or incarceration	Percent of inmates
None	20%
1	19
2	16
3-5	26
6-10	13
11 or more	6
Number	699,059

**Page 14** The admission to prison of persons on probation or parole and the percentage on probation or parole for a violent crime were based on 307,382 inmates; the arrest for violent crime was based on an estimated 315,589 inmates.

The description of revocation of parole was based on 163,686 inmates whose supervision in the community was formally revoked. The description of revocation of probation was based on 103,713 inmates whose supervision in the community was formally revoked.

Figure 23.

	Number of inmates for median sentence			
	No supervision	Probation	With new sentence	Parole Without sentence
All	370,553	72,425	129,238	33,977
Violent	213,709	25,833	45,853	10,670
Property	63,797	21,588	44,328	12,726
Drug	75,233	17,060	26,162	7,436
Public-order	16,007	7,653	12,631	2,902

**Page 15** Figures 24-27.

	Number of violent inmates reporting
Total	315,968
Homicide	86,639
Sexual assault	65,432
Robbery	97,504
Assault	55,331
Male	285,656
Female	11,441
Under 25	56,592
25-34	131,682
35-44	70,423
45 or older	38,295
White	110,757
Black	136,568
Other	7,876
Hispanic	39,598

**Page 16** Figure 29. The chart percentages as presented are rounded. Of the estimated 311,180 violent inmates who reported how well they knew their victim(s), 49.9% had committed their offense against a stranger.

Figure 30. Among violent inmates, 299,380 men and 11,800 women reported their relationship with their victim.

Figure 31.

Race and Hispanic origin	Number of violent inmates reporting relationship to victim
White	117,049
Black	143,497
Other	8,232
Hispanic	42,403

Figure 32.

	Number of violent inmates reporting relationship to victim			
	White	Black	Other	Hispanic
Homicide	33,154	37,354	1,903	12,109
Sexual assault	37,122	18,578	1,956	6,660
Robbery	24,065	57,722	1,877	13,378
Assault	17,539	25,655	2,190	8,933

**Explanatory notes** continued

Figure 33.

	Number of violent inmates reporting valid data for relationship			
	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45 or older
All	131,113	111,635	40,240	21,394
Homicide	38,123	28,137	9,757	6,664
Sexual assault	17,605	23,312	12,445	9,197
Robbery	48,277	37,251	7,705	1,943
Assault	22,375	19,162	8,616	2,895

Figure 39.

Violent offense	Number of reporting		
	Violent inmates	Victims	Both
All	317,417	312,792	317,675
Homicide	86,154	83,323	86,210
Sexual assault	65,148	64,745	65,285
Robbery	99,861	99,110	99,861
Assault	55,188	54,608	55,253

Page 17 Figure 34.

Violent offense	Number of violent inmates reporting valid data for victim injuries
All offenses	316,772
Sexual assault	65,355
Robbery	99,323
Assault	54,676

Among violent inmates who reported their offense and victim injury were 11,713 women and 295,370 men.

Figure 35. 42% of violent inmates committed their offense at home or in their victim's home.

Where the inmate committed the most serious violent offense	Percent of violent inmates
Victim's home	28%
Inmate's home	14
Commercial place	23
Public place	27
Elsewhere	8
Number reporting	316,273

Page 18 Figure 36. There were 307,960 inmates who reported whether they carried or used a weapon when they committed the violent offense for which they were serving a sentence.

Figure 37.

	Number of violent inmates reporting valid data
Murder	69,957
Manslaughter	12,379
Rape	24,029
Other sexual assault	40,395
Robbery	96,399
Assault	53,997

Figure 38.

Weapon used	Number of violent inmates
Gun	92,314
Knife	34,203
Other	14,229

Page 19 Figure 40.

Firearm possession and use	Number of reporting inmates
Ever owned	708,540
Owned month before offense	711,094
Armed during offense	699,943
Fired gun during offense	700,050

Figure 41. An estimated 243,757 inmates had possessed a handgun and reported where they had most recently acquired the weapon.

Page 20 Figure 42. The total reporting characteristics of their groups of friends was 705,517.

Figure 43.

	Number of inmates reporting size of gang	
	Median	Mean
5-6	41,791	38,032
3-4	37,587	36,661
2	37,893	37,631
1	81,492	81,324

Figure 44.

Gang features	Number of Inmates reporting group activities
5-6	44,397
3-4	39,169
1-2	126,611
0	164,539

Page 21 Figure 45. In 1991, 710,798 inmates reported whether they had ever used drugs, and 710,444 reported whether they had used regularly.

Figure 46. In 1991, 710,241 inmates reported whether they had used a drug in the month before the offense, and 699,611 reported whether they were under the influence at the time of the offense.

Figure 47.

Pattern of drug use	Percent of inmates			
	Any drug	Marijuana	Cocaine or crack	Opiates
Ever	79%	74%	50%	25%
Regularly	62	52	32	15
In month before the offense	50	32	25	10
At the time of the offense	31	11	14	6

Pattern of drug use	Number of inmates reporting			
	Any drug	Marijuana	Cocaine or crack	Opiates
Ever	710,798	708,121	708,115	708,237
Regularly	710,444	706,685	707,989	708,237
In month before the offense	710,241	705,896	707,793	708,179
At the time of the offense	699,611	699,938	707,403	708,115

**Page 22** Figures 48 and 49. Inmates who had used drugs in the month before the offense included those who committed their offense under the influence of drugs. Inmates reporting that they committed their offense to get money for drugs may have been in the other categories as well.

The number of Inmates giving valid responses about — drug use In the month before the offense: 710,241 committing the offense under the influence of drugs: 699,611 committing the offense to get money for drugs: 696,677

Age group	Number of inmates reporting whether they had used drugs in the month before the offense
17 or younger	4,552
18-24	151,154
25-29	172,230
30-34	152,454
35-44	161,232
45-54	46,475
55 or older	22,144

**Page 23** Figure 50.

Most serious offense	Number of inmates reporting drugs used in the month before the offense			
	Crack	Powder cocaine	Other drugs	No drugs
Crack/cocaine		71,055		
Cocaine		107,724		
Another drug		175,422		
No drug		356,040		

Most serious offense	Percent of inmates who in the month before the offense used			
	Crack	Powder cocaine	Other drugs	No drugs
Other violent	<1%	1%	2%	2%
Other property	8	5	7	9
Other drug	<1	1	1	<1

**Page 24** Figure 52. Reporting on whether they had participated in a drug treatment program were an estimated 698,777 inmates — 698,658 also reporting on use of drugs ever in the past and 698,332 reporting on use of drugs in the month before their offense.

Figure 53.

Type of drug program participation since admission	Percent of	
	All inmates	Inmates who used drugs in the month before the offense
In-patient	7%	11%
Group	22	32
Individual	3	5
Peer group	8	12
Drug education	4	7
Number of inmates reporting	698,777	698,777

Inmates reported on all types of drug program participation during their current prison term. Whenever an inmate listed more than one program category, the interviewer asked if a mentioned program was conducted separately from the previously reported programs. Programs integral to other drug treatment efforts were not counted for figure 53; programs identified as separate were included. For example, if a prisoner participated as an in-patient and reported that drug education was a part of the in-patient treatment, that drug education was not entered separately. Therefore, the 4% of inmates who had been educated about the effects of drugs had not received that education as a part of any other prison drug program.

Since admission, 59% of inmates who had ever used drugs and 52% of those who had used drugs in the month before their offense had not participated in any drug treatment program.

**Page 26** Figure 56. The number of inmates who committed their offense under the influence of alcohol was 127,096; under the influence of drugs only, 117,671; and under the influence of both drugs and alcohol, 97,690.

Inmates who had been drinking before their offense and who reported the amount drunk: Total (217,693), violent (116,302), property (52,757), drugs (26,341), and public-order (19,966).

Figure 58. Inmates sentenced for property or public-order offenses had the highest rate of participation in alcohol-abuse programs.

**Explanatory notes** continued

Offense	Percent of inmates who had ever participated in a prison-sponsored alcohol abuse program
Violent	34.8%
Property	40.4
Drug	28.0
Public-order	48.6

The percentages of participating inmates were based on 558,782 inmates who reported ever drinking. Inmates who reported never drinking (143,176) and drinking inmates who had committed an offense not included in the summary categories (9,685) were not included.

**Page 27** Figure 59. The number of inmates reporting on their prison program participation was 711,643.

Figure 60. Of the inmates reporting on their participation in prison educational or vocational programs were 658, 893 men and 37,458 women.

Inmates reporting on program participation could report more than one program.

The percentages of inmates with work assignments and of hours worked were based on 711,643 inmates responding.

Figure 61. The percentage of all inmates was based on 711,643 inmates; of those inmates who worked and were paid money, 471,308; and of inmates who worked for nonmonetary compensation, 203,705. The average pay per hour was calculated from 293,492 inmates who reported a valid income.

**Page 28** Figures 62 and 64.

Security level and region	Number of inmates reporting	
	Current offense	Prior offense
Maximum	182,787	180,687
Medium	348,156	345,331
Minimum	161,584	160,247
Northeast	122,778	121,633
Midwest	148,953	146,991
South	274,769	272,948
West	157,681	156,043

Figure 63. The higher the housing security level, the larger the percentage of violent inmates.

Security level and type of current offense	Percent of inmates	
	First time	Recidivist
Maximum (180,687)		
Violent	14.9%	59.4%
Nonviolent	4.5	21.2
Medium (345,331)		
Violent	13.2%	48.4%
Nonviolent	6.6	31.8
Minimum (160,247)		
Violent	9.3%	38.4%
Nonviolent	8.8	43.5



A team of Bureau of Justice Statistics analysts wrote this report. Team members were Darrell Gilliard, Lawrence Greenfeld, Thomas Hester, Louis Jankowski, Danielle Morton, Tracy Snell, and James Stephan guided by Allen Beck and Caroline Wolf Harlow. Corrections statistics are prepared under the general direction of Lawrence Greenfeld. Thomas Hester edited this report. Yvonne Boston and Marilyn Marbrook, chief of the publication unit, produced it.

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March 1993, NCJ-136949

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.