



# CRIMES

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## WHAT IS A CRIME?

A crime is an act specifically prohibited by law, or failure to perform an act specifically required by law, for which punishment is prescribed (California Penal Code section 15).

## HOW ARE CRIMES COUNTED?

The **Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program** was inaugurated in 1930 and is administered on the national level by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). It provides criminal statistics for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management. In California, this program is administered by the Department of Justice (DOJ).

As part of the UCR Program, law enforcement agencies throughout the state report summary information to the DOJ on "selected" crimes. Reported crimes are classified by UCR definitions designed to eliminate differences among the various states' penal code definitions of crimes.

The crimes, selected because of seriousness, frequency of occurrence, and the likelihood of being reported to the police, are homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. These eight offenses are known as Part I crimes. Except for larceny-theft, UCR does not count misdemeanors and infractions.

The DOJ categorizes Part I crimes as either violent (homicide, forcible rape, aggravated assault, and robbery) or property (burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny-theft over \$400) crimes. In 2003, larceny-theft over \$400 was added to the property crime category to give a more representative depiction of crime in California and to correlate more closely to national data presentation. Note that since these data have only been available since 1983, property crime totals (number and rate per 100,000 population) from 1983 to 2003 have been adjusted accordingly. Therefore, property crime data presented in this report will differ from data published previously, and the reader is cautioned against making comparisons with previous publications.

The UCR Program accounts for Part I crimes only; however, some Part I crimes go undetected and therefore unreported. This, along with the hierarchy rule, accounts for a certain amount of underreporting in the system. Most crimes occur singly as opposed to more than one crime being committed within the same incident. The hierarchy rule assigns a value to each crime and requires that only the single most serious offense be reported. For example, if a person were to enter a bar, rob eight patrons, and kill the bartender, only the homicide would be reported. Arson is the exception. Since arson frequently occurs in conjunction with other crimes, it is felt that valuable information could be lost using the hierarchy rule. Therefore, arson is counted along with the other most serious offense.

## WHAT IS A RATE?

A rate describes the number of events that occur within a given population. Crime rates and clearance rates are used in this section. Formulas for calculating both can be found in Appendix 2. Note that use of the California Crime Index has been suspended until a new national crime index is established by the FBI.

## WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE UCR PROGRAM?

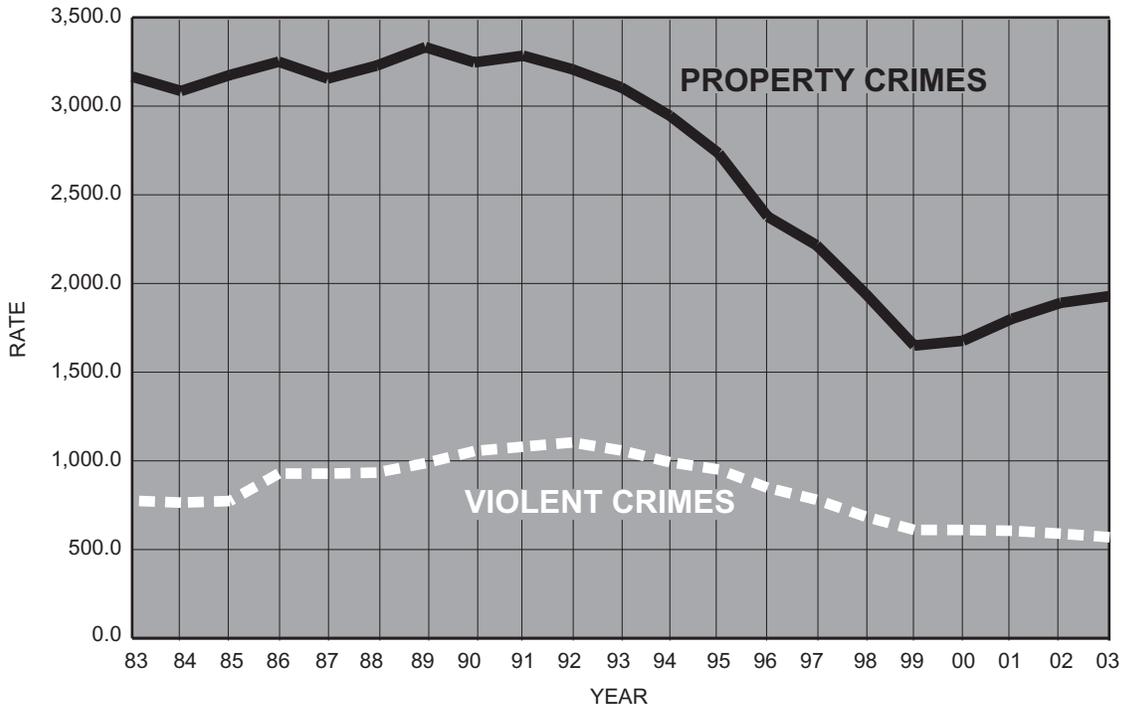
Since its inception in 1930, UCR has become a nationwide program. All California law enforcement agencies participate. Quality-control surveys conducted by the DOJ staff have shown a high level of compliance with UCR reporting standards. The number of participants and the amount and quality of data collected under the stringent rules of the system make UCR a valuable program. In California, because of the high quality of its law enforcement agencies and their close cooperation with the DOJ, UCR data are, and have been for many years, an extremely good indicator of the extent of, and fluctuation in, crimes reported to law enforcement.

# CRIME TRENDS, 1983-2003

## CRIME IN CALIFORNIA, 1983-2003

By Category

Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 1.

Data depicting crime in California have been published continuously for 51 years. The first "Crime in California" publication was issued in 1953 and reported data for the 1952 calendar year.

### Comparing 1983 to 2003:

- The violent crime rate decreased 26.6 percent (from 775.6 to 569.4).
- The property crime rate decreased 39.1 percent (from 3,166.1 to 1,928.9).

The violent crime rate was on a general increase from 1983 to 1992, when it peaked at 1,103.9. Since then, the rate has seen annual decreases, dropping a total of 48.4 percent, including a 3.4 percent decrease from 2002 to 2003. The 2003 rate of 569.4 is the lowest since the 1973 rate of 558.3.

Since 1983, the property crime rate has fluctuated, with a peak of 3,332.4 seen in 1989. The rate then declined each

year, with the exception of a slight increase in 1991, before reaching a low of 1,649.8 in 1999. The rate has seen annual increases since that time, including a 2.0 percent increase from 2002 to 2003. Note that larceny-theft over \$400 was added to the property crime category in 2003 to give a more representative depiction of crime in California and to correlate more closely to national data presentation. These data are only available since 1983, hence the chart shown above.

Since 1983, there have been many changes in laws and data collection procedures. For instance, in 1986 legislation was enacted that required reporting domestic violence as criminal conduct. As a result, the aggravated assault rate increased over 35 percent in one year. These types of changes should be considered when comparing data.

Note that use of the California Crime Index has been suspended until a new national crime index is established by the FBI.

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## Violent and Property Crime

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- Violent crimes decreased 11.0 percent in number.
- Property crimes increased 6.5 percent in number.

### From 2002 to 2003:

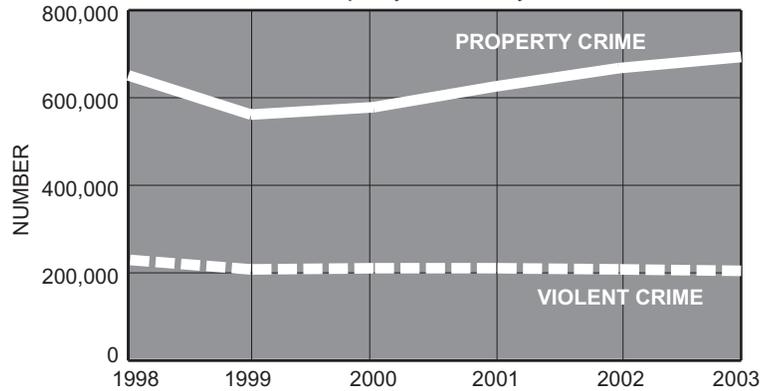
- Violent crimes decreased 1.6 percent in number.
- Property crimes increased 3.8 percent in number.

### In 2003:

- There were 204,591 violent crimes reported.
- There were 693,137 property crimes reported.

*The number of violent crimes has been on a general decline for the years shown, but property crimes have been increasing since 1999.*

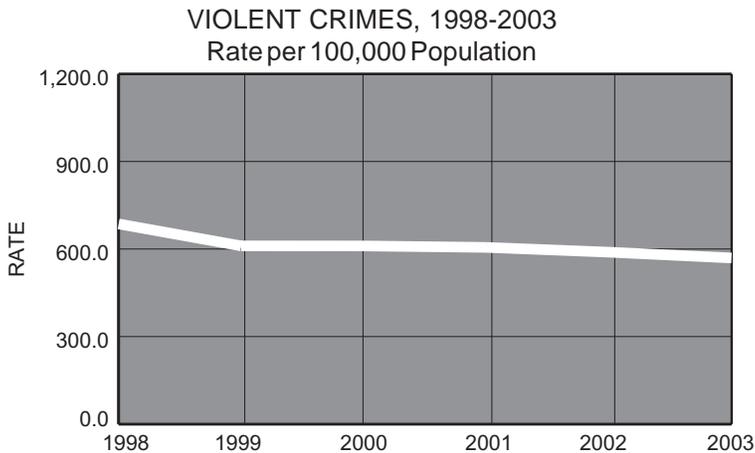
CRIME IN CALIFORNIA, 1998-2003  
Violent and Property Crimes by Number



Source: Table 2.

## Violent Crimes

**Violent Crimes** - homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.



Source: Table 2.

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

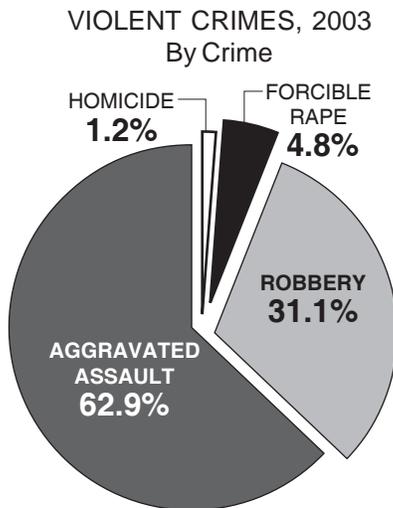
- The rate of reported violent crimes decreased 17.0 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

- The violent crime rate decreased 3.4 percent.

### In 2003, of 204,591 violent crimes reported:

- Homicide accounted for 1.2 percent (2,402).
- Forcible rape accounted for 4.8 percent (9,918).
- Robbery accounted for 31.1 percent (63,597).
- Aggravated assault accounted for 62.9 percent (128,674).



Source: Table 3.

*The violent crime rate declined for the 11th consecutive year, decreasing 3.4 percent from 2002 to 2003 (see Table 1).*

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## Homicide

**Homicide** - The willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another. Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter comprise this category.

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The rate of reported homicides increased 3.1 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

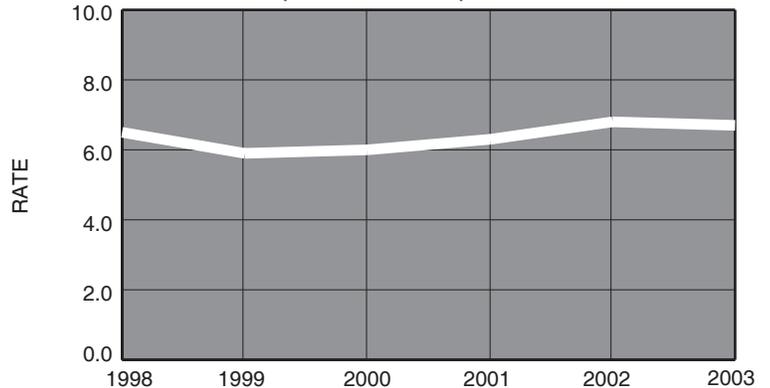
- The homicide rate decreased 1.5 percent.

In 2003, of 2,402 homicides reported, the type of weapon was known in 2,379 cases (99.0 percent). Of these:

- Firearms accounted for 72.8 percent (1,733).
- Knives or cutting instruments accounted for 10.8 percent (258).
- Blunt objects (clubs, etc.) accounted for 4.9 percent (116).
- Personal weapons (hands, feet, etc.) accounted for 5.8 percent (138).
- Other weapons accounted for 5.6 percent (134).

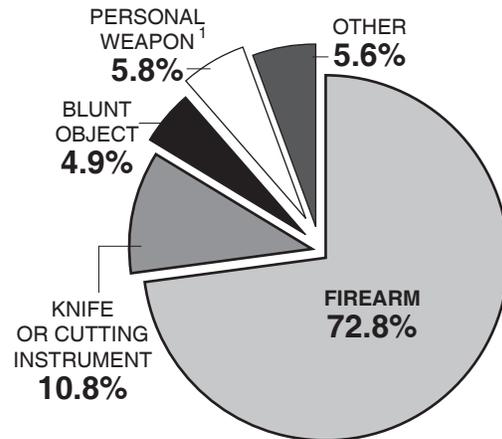
*In 2003, the homicide rate decreased (1.5 percent) after increasing the three previous years.*

HOMICIDE CRIMES, 1998-2003  
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

HOMICIDE CRIMES, 2003  
By Type of Weapon Used



Source: Table 4.

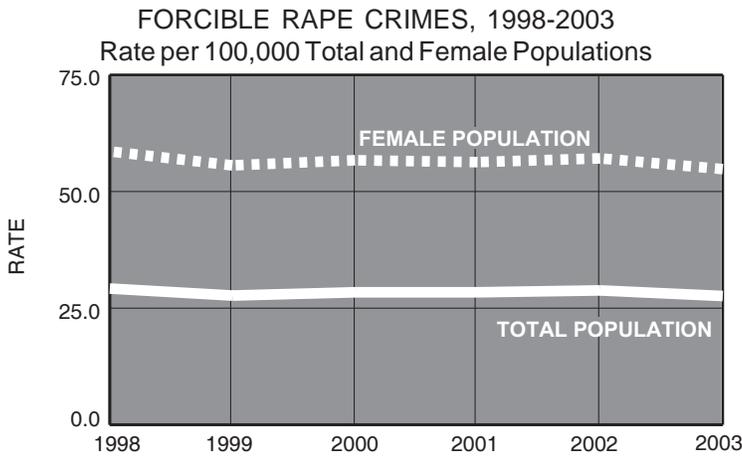
<sup>1</sup>Personal weapons include hands, feet, etc.

Note: Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

## Forcible Rape

**Forcible Rape** - *The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Assaults or attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are included.*

The UCR definition of forcible rape states that only females can be victims; therefore, a forcible rape crime rate based exclusively on the female population is included. **The following discussion is based on the rate of occurrence for both female population and total population** (see Tables 2 and 5).



Sources: Tables 2 and 5.

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

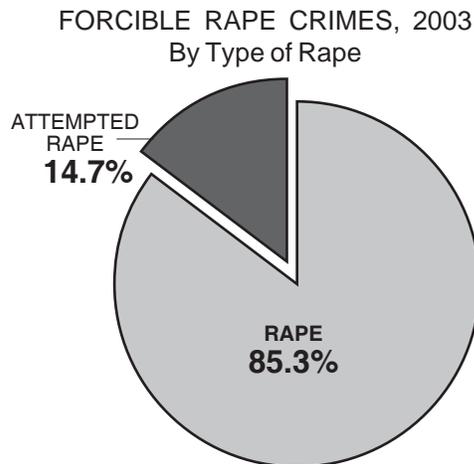
- The rate of reported forcible rapes (female population) decreased 6.5 percent.
- The rate of reported forcible rapes (total population) decreased 5.5 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

- The forcible rape rate (total population) decreased 4.2 percent.
- The forcible rape rate (female population) decreased 4.0 percent.

### In 2003, of 9,918 forcible rapes reported:

- Rape accounted for 85.3 percent (8,461).
- Attempted rape accounted for 14.7 percent (1,457).



Source: Table 5.

*From 2002 to 2003, the forcible rape rate declined for females and for the total population.*

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## Robbery

**Robbery** - The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The rate of reported robberies decreased 13.8 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

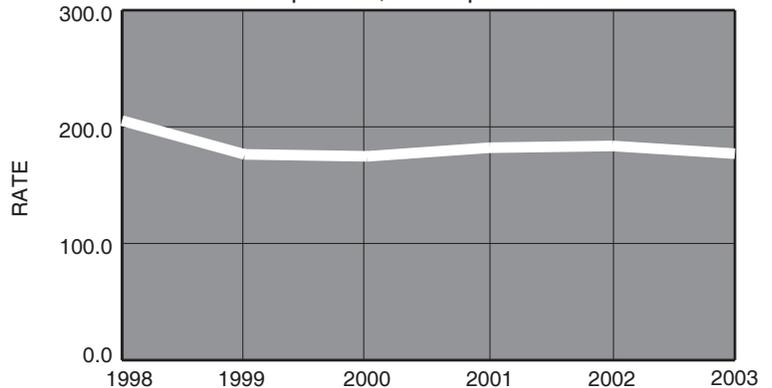
- The robbery rate decreased 3.6 percent.

In 2003, of 63,597 robberies reported:

- Highway robbery (streets, parks, parking lots, etc.) accounted for 46.4 percent (29,511).
- Commercial robbery accounted for 23.4 percent (14,854).
- Residential robbery accounted for 8.4 percent (5,349).
- Bank robbery accounted for 2.2 percent (1,369).
- Robberies that occurred in other locations (churches, schools, trains, etc.) accounted for 19.7 percent (12,514).

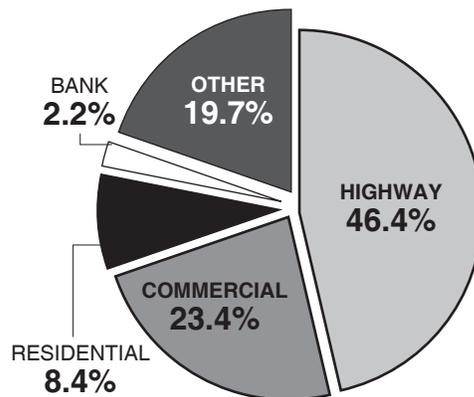
*After increasing for the previous two years, the robbery rate decreased in 2003.*

ROBBERY CRIMES, 1998-2003  
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

ROBBERY CRIMES, 2003  
By Location



Source: Table 6.

Note: Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

## Robbery (continued)

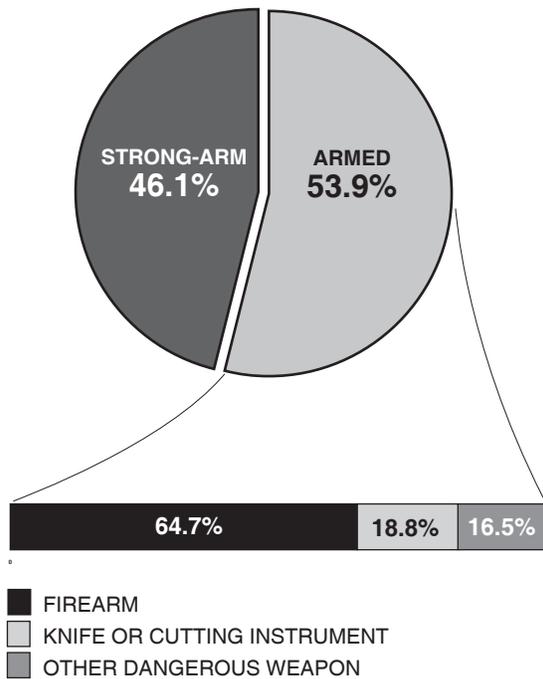
In 2003, of all robberies reported:

- Armed robbery accounted for 53.9 percent (34,252).
- Strong-arm robbery accounted for 46.1 percent (29,345).

Of the 34,252 armed robberies reported:

- Firearms were involved in 64.7 percent (22,155).
- Knives or cutting instruments were involved in 18.8 percent (6,453).
- Other dangerous weapons were involved in 16.5 percent (5,644).

ROBBERY CRIMES, 2003  
By Type of Robbery and Type of Weapon if Armed



Source: Table 6.

*In 2003, over half of all robberies involved the use of a weapon; over six out of ten times that weapon was a firearm.*

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## Aggravated Assault

**Aggravated Assault** - *The unlawful attack or attempted attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault is usually accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm.*

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The rate of reported aggravated assaults decreased 19.5 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

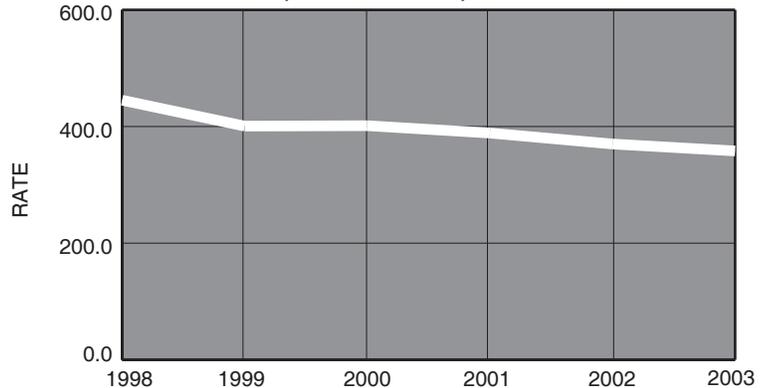
- The aggravated assault rate decreased 3.2 percent.

In 2003, of 128,674 aggravated assaults reported:

- Firearms were involved in 17.3 percent (22,311).
- Knives or cutting instruments were involved in 14.0 percent (18,065).
- Other dangerous weapons were involved in 33.2 percent (42,699).
- Personal weapons were involved in 35.4 percent (45,599).

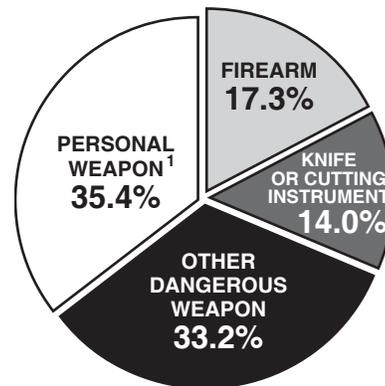
*With the exception of a slight increase in 2000, the aggravated assault rate has dropped each year since its peak in 1992 (see Table 1).*

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT CRIMES, 1998-2003  
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT CRIMES, 2003  
By Type of Weapon Used



Source: Table 7.

<sup>1</sup>Personal weapons include hands, feet, etc.

Note: Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

## Property Crimes

**Property Crimes** - burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny-theft over \$400.

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The rate of reported property crimes decreased 0.8 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

- The property crime rate increased 2.0 percent.

In 2003, of 693,137 property crimes reported:

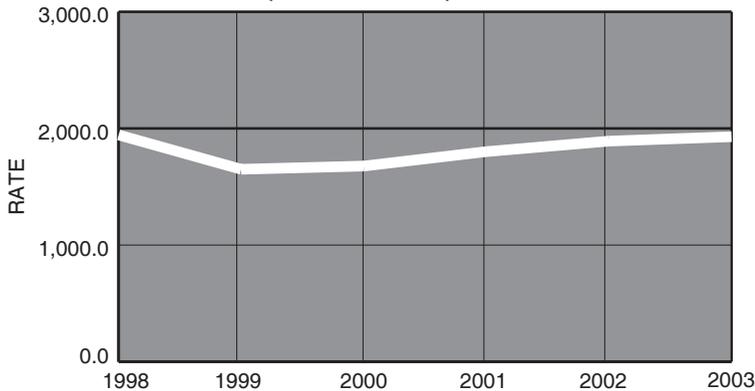
- Burglary accounted for 34.7 percent (240,705).
- Motor vehicle theft accounted for 34.7 percent (240,798).
- Larceny-theft over \$400 accounted for 30.5 percent (211,634).

In 2003, larceny-theft over \$400 was added to the property crime category to give a more representative depiction of crime in California. See "Appendix 1, Data Characteristics and Known Limitations."

*After decreasing for eight consecutive years, the property crime rate has seen four consecutive years of increases. In 2003, the rate increased 2.0 percent (see Table 1).*

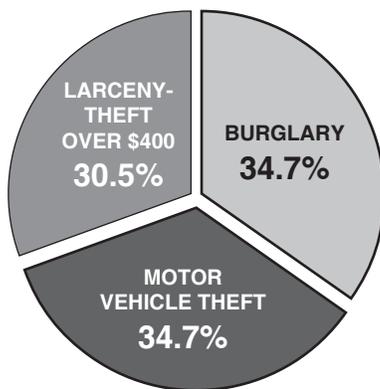
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PROPERTY CRIMES, 1998-2003  
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

PROPERTY CRIMES, 2003  
By Crime



Source: Table 3.

Note: Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

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## Burglary

**Burglary** - The unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft. Attempted burglary is included.

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The rate of reported burglaries decreased 16.5 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

- The burglary rate decreased 0.4 percent.

In 2003, of 240,705 burglaries and attempted burglaries reported:

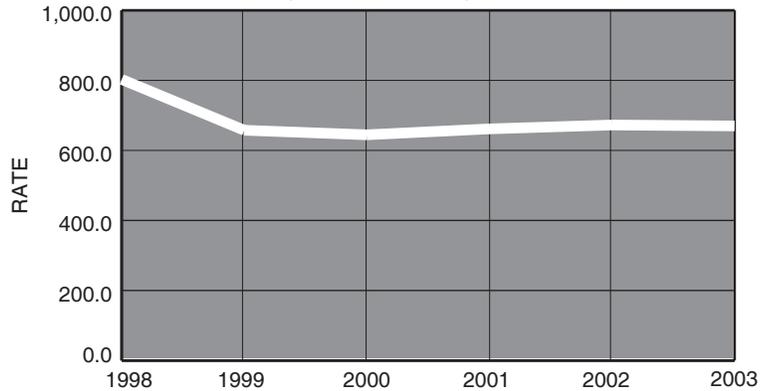
- Burglary accounted for 93.6 percent (225,180).
- Attempted burglary accounted for 6.4 percent (15,525).

Of the 225,180 burglaries that occurred:

- Structures entered by force accounted for 61.4 percent (138,307).
- Structures entered without force accounted for 38.6 percent (86,873).

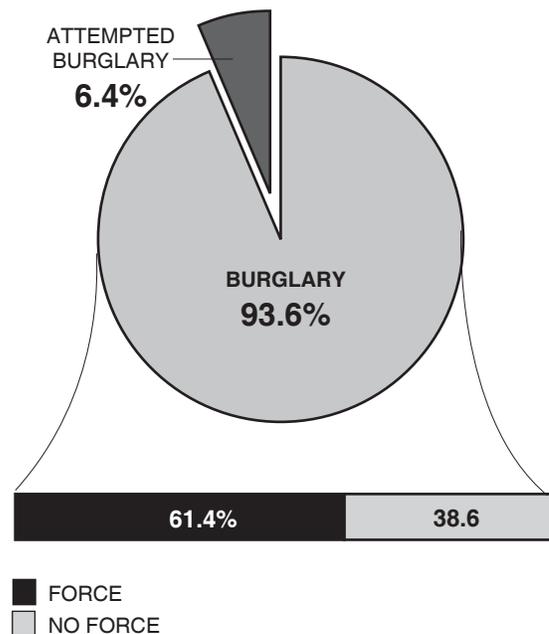
*In 2003, the burglary rate dropped slightly (0.4 percent) after increasing for the past two years.*

BURGLARY CRIMES, 1998-2003  
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

BURGLARY CRIMES, 2003  
By Type of Burglary and Type of Entry



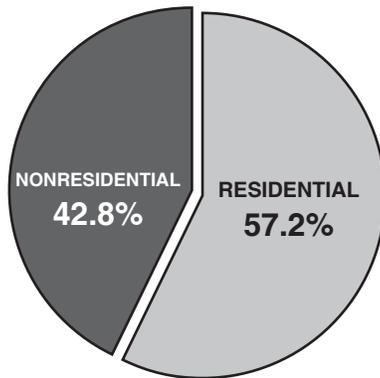
Source: Table 8.

## Burglary (continued)

In 2003, of all burglaries reported:

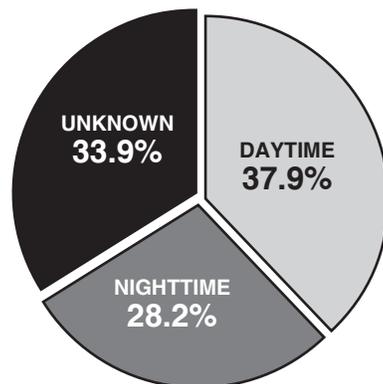
- Residential burglary accounted for 57.2 percent (137,801).
- Nonresidential burglary accounted for 42.8 percent (102,904). Included in this category are commercial establishments, public buildings, etc.
- Daytime burglary accounted for 37.9 percent (91,198).
- Nighttime burglary accounted for 28.2 percent (67,840).
- Burglaries that occurred during an unknown hour accounted for 33.9 percent (81,667).

BURGLARY CRIMES, 2003  
By Location



Source: Table 8.

BURGLARY CRIMES, 2003  
By Time of Day



Source: Table 8.

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## Motor Vehicle Theft

**Motor Vehicle Theft** - *The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.*

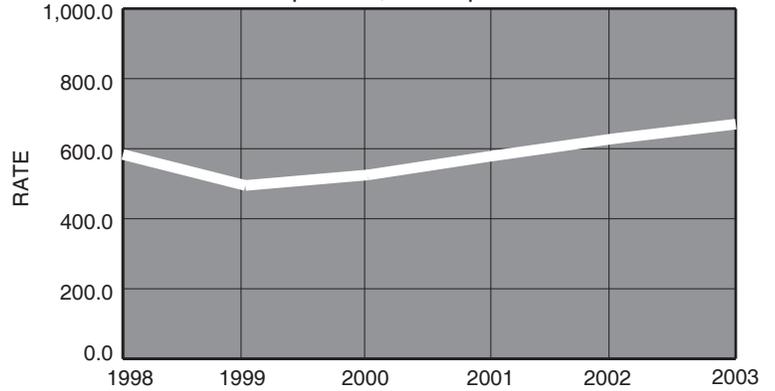
### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The rate of reported motor vehicle thefts increased 14.9 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

- The motor vehicle theft rate increased 6.7 percent.

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT CRIMES, 1998-2003  
Rate per 100,000 Population

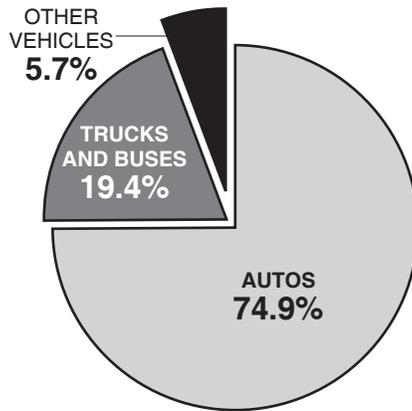


Source: Table 2.

*In 2003, motor vehicle theft increased in rate and number for the fourth consecutive year.*

## Motor Vehicle Theft (continued)

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT CRIMES, 2003  
By Type of Vehicle



Source: Table 9.

In 2003, of 240,798 motor vehicle thefts reported:

- Autos accounted for 74.9 percent (180,451).
- Trucks and buses accounted for 19.4 percent (46,741). Included in this category are pickup trucks, vans, and motor homes.
- Other vehicles accounted for 5.7 percent (13,606). Included in this category are motorcycles, snowmobiles, motor scooters, and trail bikes.

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## Larceny-Theft

**Larceny-Theft** - The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another (except embezzlement, fraud, forgery, and worthless checks).

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The rate of total reported larceny-thefts decreased 6.3 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

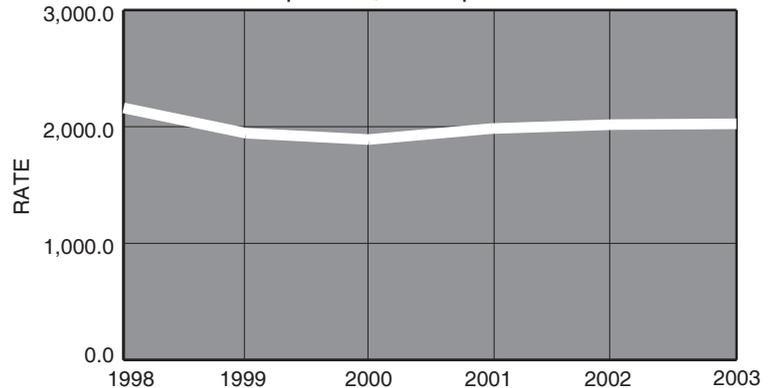
- The total larceny-theft rate increased 0.3 percent.

In 2003, of 727,527 larceny-thefts reported:

- Thefts under \$50 in value accounted for 35.2 percent (256,026).
- Thefts \$50 to \$199 in value accounted for 20.1 percent (146,475).
- Thefts \$200 to \$400 in value accounted for 15.6 percent (113,392).
- Thefts over \$400 in value accounted for 29.1 percent (211,634).

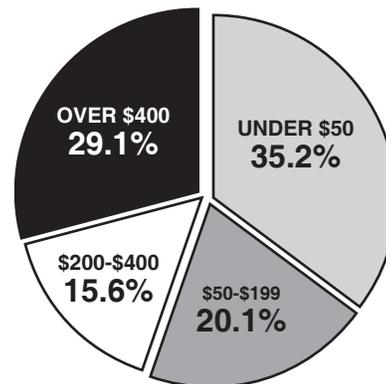
*In 2003, larceny-thefts increased in rate and number for the third consecutive year.*

LARCENY-THEFT CRIMES, 1998-2003  
Rate per 100,000 Population



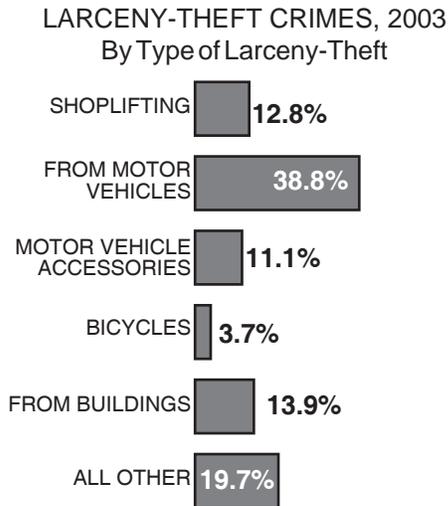
Source: Table 2.

LARCENY-THEFT CRIMES, 2003  
By Value Category of Loss



Source: Table 11.

## Larceny-Theft (continued)



Source: Table 11.

In 2003, of 727,527 larceny-thefts reported:

- Shoplifting accounted for 12.8 percent (93,086).
- Thefts from motor vehicles accounted for 38.8 percent (282,126).
- Thefts of motor vehicle accessories accounted for 11.1 percent (80,734).
- Thefts of bicycles accounted for 3.7 percent (26,605).
- Thefts from buildings accounted for 13.9 percent (101,445).
- All other types of larceny-thefts accounted for 19.7 percent (143,531).

*In 2003, nearly half (49.9 percent) of all larceny-theft crimes involved theft from motor vehicles and theft of motor vehicle accessories.*

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## Value of Stolen and Recovered Property

As part of the UCR Program, law enforcement agencies submit monthly reports showing the estimated dollar value of property stolen and property recovered. In these reports, the type of property is categorized in a uniform manner. However, agencies do not report these data consistently and frequently vary in their methods of estimating the dollar value of stolen property. Furthermore, property stolen and property recovered in any given time period are not necessarily the same property. For these reasons, dollar values of such property must be viewed as rough estimates.

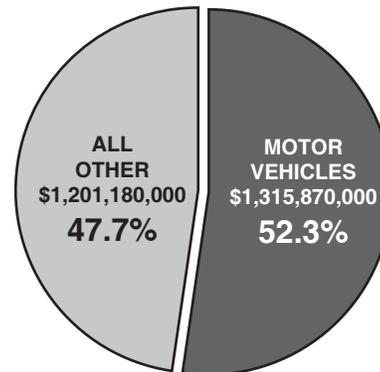
### From 2002 to 2003:

- There was a 1.1 percent increase in the dollar value of all stolen property.
- There was a 6.0 percent increase in the dollar value of motor vehicles stolen.
- There was a 3.7 percent decrease in the dollar value of all other stolen property.

In 2003, of the total dollar value (\$2,517,050,000) of all property reported stolen:

- Motor vehicles accounted for \$1,315,870,000 (52.3 percent).
- All other property accounted for \$1,201,180,000 (47.7 percent).

VALUE OF STOLEN PROPERTY, 2003  
By Type

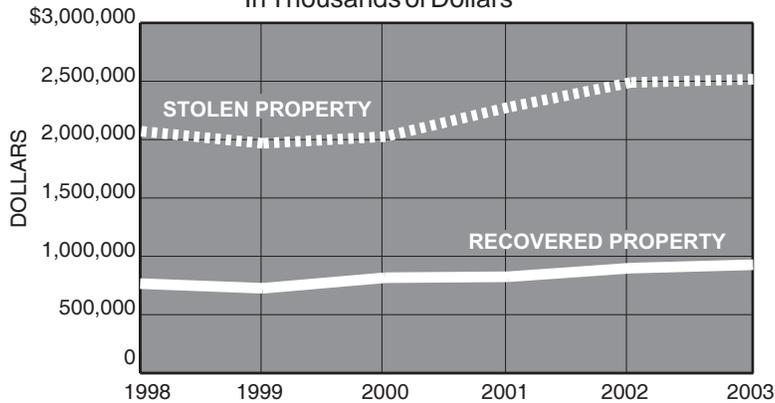


Source: Table 12.

Note: Dollar values are rounded to the nearest ten thousand.

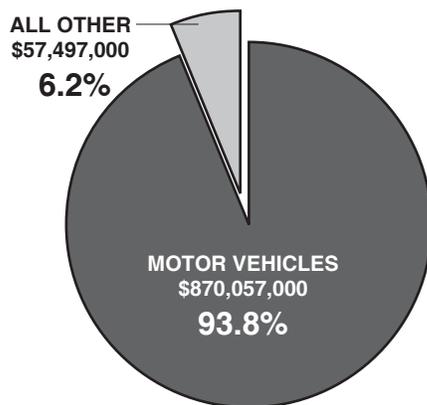
## Value of Stolen and Recovered Property (continued)

VALUE OF STOLEN AND RECOVERED PROPERTY, 1998-2003  
In Thousands of Dollars



Source: Table 12.

VALUE OF RECOVERED PROPERTY, 2003  
By Type



Source: Table 12.

Note: Dollar values are rounded to the nearest thousand.

### From 2002 to 2003:

- There was a 3.2 percent increase in the dollar value of all recovered property.
- There was a 3.9 percent increase in the dollar value of motor vehicles recovered.
- There was a 5.6 percent decrease in the dollar value of all other recovered property.

In 2003, of the total dollar value (\$927,554,000) of property reported recovered:

- Motor vehicles accounted for \$870,057,000 (93.8 percent).
- All other property accounted for \$57,497,000 (6.2 percent).

*In 2003, the total value of stolen property increased for the fourth consecutive year.*

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## Arson

**Arson** - Any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, or the personal property of another, etc.

### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The rate of reported arsons decreased 10.8 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

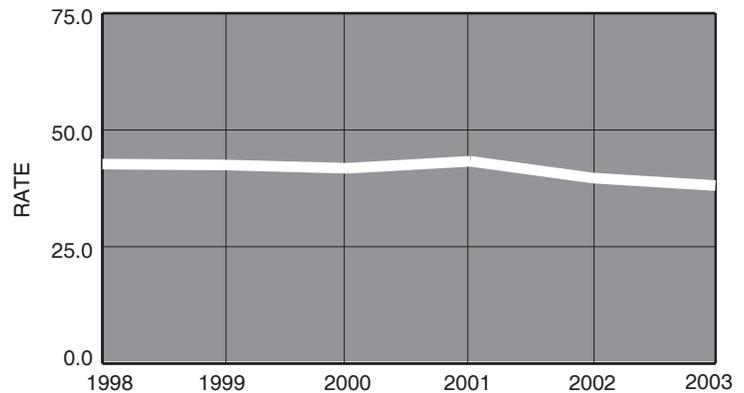
- The arson rate decreased 4.0 percent.

In 2003, of 13,677 arsons reported:

- Structural properties were targeted in 29.2 percent (3,992) of the offenses.
- Mobile properties were targeted in 39.6 percent (5,419) of the offenses.
- Other properties were targeted in 31.2 percent (4,266) of the offenses. Included in this category are crops, timber, fences, signs, etc.

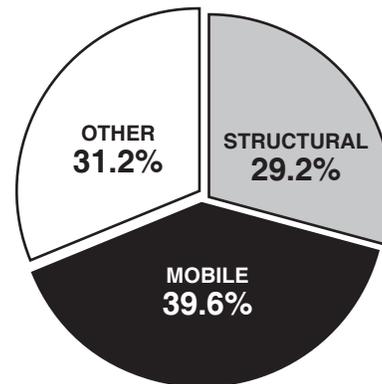
*In 2003, arsons decreased in rate and number for the second consecutive year.*

ARSON CRIMES, 1998-2003  
Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Table 2.

ARSON CRIMES, 2003  
By Type of Property Targeted

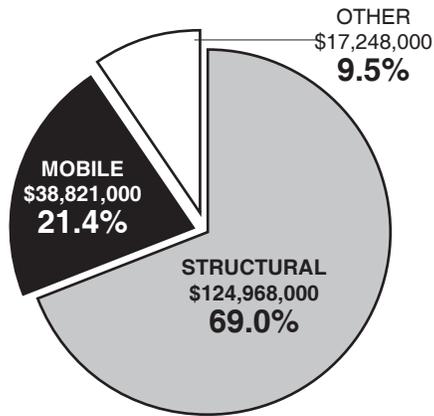


Source: Table 14.

Note: Property type is determined by the point of origin of a fire.

## Arson (continued)

ARSON CRIMES, 2003  
By Value of Property Damage



Source: Table 14.

Notes: Property type is determined by the point of origin of a fire.  
Dollar values are rounded to the nearest thousand.  
Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

In 2003, the total estimated value of all property damaged was \$181,037,000. The value of damage resulting from arsons directed at:

- Structural properties accounted for \$124,968,000 (69.0 percent).
- Mobile properties accounted for \$38,821,000 (21.4 percent).
- Other properties accounted for \$17,248,000 (9.5 percent).

*In 2003, the property damage value to "Other Properties" was 9.5 percent of the total. This was nearly four times higher than the percentage in 2002 (2.5 percent).*

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# CRIMES

## Clearances

Crimes can be cleared by arrests or "exceptional means." An offense is cleared or "solved" for crime reporting purposes when at least one person is arrested, charged with the commission of the crime, and turned over to the court for prosecution or referred to juvenile authorities. In certain situations a clearance may be counted by "exceptional means" when the police definitely know the identity of the offender, have enough information to support an arrest, and know the location of the offender but for some reason cannot take the offender into custody.

A clearance rate is the percentage obtained when the number of clearances reported are divided by the number of crimes reported.

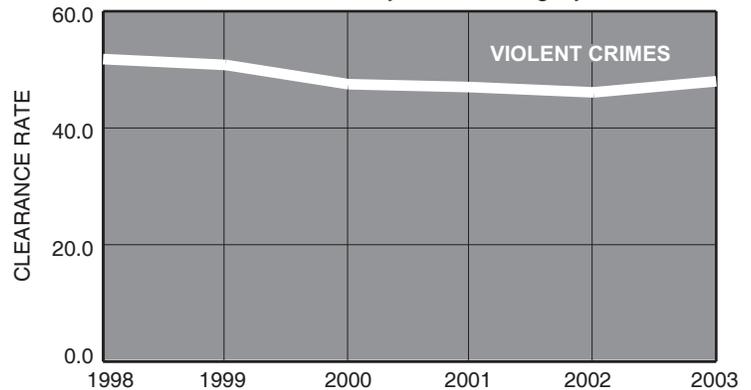
### Comparing 1998 to 2003:

- The violent crime clearance rate decreased from 51.8 to 48.0 percent.

### From 2002 to 2003:

- The violent crime clearance rate increased from 46.1 to 48.0 percent.

CRIME IN CALIFORNIA, 1998-2003  
Clearance Rate by Crime Category



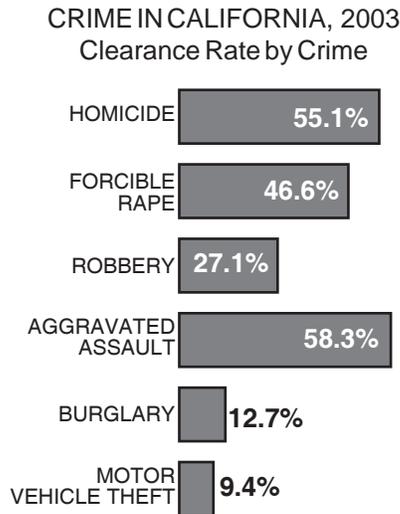
Source: Table 15.

Note: In 2003, larceny-theft over \$400 was added to the property crime category to give a more representative depiction of crime in California. However, since clearance data are not collected for this offense, total property crime clearances and clearance rates are unavailable. These data will be reported in the future as they become available.

## Clearances (continued)

In 2003,

- Aggravated assault had the highest clearance rate (58.3 percent), up 2.6 percent from 2002.
- Motor vehicle theft had the lowest clearance rate (9.4 percent).



Source: Table 15.

*The homicide clearance rate decreased 3.2 percent from 2002 to 2003.*

**Arrests →**