



FACT SHEET: Crime Rates Not Affected By Drug Penalties

No apparent link can be drawn from the penalty for drug possession and crime rates in a given state. Below is the U.S. Census Bureau’s report of crime rates by state and by type of offense.ⁱ The report is based on data collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation on crimes reported to law enforcement under the Uniform Crime Reports program. The data below are from the calendar year 2009.

- Felony state rate of violent crime per 100,000: 397.5
- Misdemeanor state rate of violent crimeⁱⁱ per 100,000: 376.4
- Felony state rate of property crime per 100,000: 3,071.9
- Misdemeanor state rate of property crime per 100,000: 2,913.2

Presented below are two versions of the same table. The first is sorted by violent crime rate, and the second is sorted by property crime rate, in ascending order. Misdemeanor states are shaded in grey. In both tables, misdemeanor states are evenly distributed within the ranking, and no meaningful trend can be established by either violent or property crime in states with lesser penalties for drug possession.

Table 308. Crime Rates by State and by Type, 2009 – sorted by violent crime rate in ascending order

State	Violent Crime/100,000				
	Total	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggr. Assault
United States	439.7	5.1	28.5	137.6	268.6
Maine	119.9	2.0	28.4	30.3	59.2
Vermont	135.1	1.3	21.5	18.0	94.3
New Hamp.	169.5	0.9	31.2	37.2	100.1
South Dakota	201.0	3.6	59.5	14.9	123.1
Utah	216.2	1.4	33.7	47.3	133.8
Wyoming	219.3	2.0	31.7	14.3	171.3
North Dakota	223.6	2.0	43.5	17.2	161.0
Virginia	230.0	4.7	19.9	80.2	125.2
Idaho	238.5	1.5	37.2	16.5	183.4
Rhode Island	254.3	3.0	28.1	74.5	148.6
Wisconsin	259.7	2.6	19.8	87.7	149.6
Oregon	261.2	2.3	31.4	65.3	162.3
Kentucky	265.5	4.3	35.3	86.8	139.0
Hawaii	274.1	1.8	29.7	79.5	163.1
Montana	283.9	3.2	35.7	22.9	222.0

Iowa	294.5	1.3	30.9	42.2	220.2
Connecticut	300.5	3.0	18.7	113.6	165.2
Nebraska	305.5	2.5	35.5	74.7	192.8
Mississippi	306.7	6.9	37.0	117.3	145.4
New Jersey	311.3	3.7	12.0	133.7	162.0
West Virginia	331.2	4.9	28.4	56.2	241.7
Washington	338.3	2.8	38.5	103.4	193.5
Colorado	340.9	3.2	45.4	67.9	224.5
Ohio	358.1	5.0	37.7	167.6	147.8
Indiana	366.4	5.3	27.2	129.4	204.4
New York	385.5	4.0	13.2	144.5	223.7
Pennsylvania	388.9	5.4	28.4	142.4	212.6
Kansas	412.0	4.7	42.7	66.7	297.9
N. Carolina	414.0	5.4	25.2	131.6	251.8
Arizona	423.2	5.5	32.7	123.9	261.1
Georgia	432.6	6.0	23.7	157.0	245.9
Alabama	459.9	7.1	32.8	142.5	277.5
Massachusetts	465.6	2.7	26.4	114.1	322.4
California	473.4	5.4	23.6	173.7	270.8
Texas	491.4	5.4	33.5	153.6	299.0
Missouri	500.3	6.6	27.3	127.1	339.2
Michigan	504.4	6.3	45.3	126.5	326.5
Oklahoma	510.4	6.5	42.1	92.9	369.0
Arkansas	530.3	6.3	48.7	93.5	381.8
Maryland	590.0	7.7	20.3	210.7	351.3
Florida	612.6	5.5	29.7	166.8	410.6
Louisiana	628.4	12.3	29.5	142.3	444.3
Alaska	632.6	3.2	73.4	94.0	462.0
Delaware	645.1	4.6	44.6	189.7	406.2
New Mexico	652.8	10.0	53.9	98.7	490.3
Tennessee	666.0	7.4	32.1	153.3	473.2
S. Carolina	675.1	6.7	36.5	126.0	506.0
Nevada	704.6	5.9	38.6	228.0	432.1
D.C.	1,348.9	24.2	25.0	734.4	565.3
Minnesota	(NA)	1.5	(NA)	70.4	142.3
Illinois	(NA)	8.4	(NA)	260.7	349.1

Table 308. Crime Rates by State and by Type, 2009 – sorted by property crime rate in ascending order

State	Property Crime/100,000			
	Total	Burglary	Larceny	Vehicle Theft
United States	3,071.5	724.9	2,080.6	266.0
South Dakota	1,825.2	324.0	1,394.2	107.1
New York	1,927.5	321.6	1,493.6	112.3
North Dakota	2,008.6	375.7	1,497.9	135.0
Idaho	2,017.1	429.3	1,493.0	94.8
New Jersey	2,075.2	424.2	1,472.9	178.1
Pennsylvania	2,219.2	439.2	1,635.5	144.5
New Hamp.	2,283.4	383.7	1,810.2	89.5
Massachusetts	2,329.2	524.1	1,624.4	180.7
Connecticut	2,345.8	431.1	1,702.7	212.0
Maine	2,405.1	510.4	1,817.1	77.5
Iowa	2,436.4	570.1	1,730.4	136.0
Vermont	2,442.1	562.8	1,806.2	73.2
Virginia	2,456.1	404.8	1,903.4	148.0
Montana	2,544.0	374.1	2,007.6	162.2
Kentucky	2,558.5	697.8	1,718.2	142.4
Wisconsin	2,612.6	475.5	1,978.1	159.1
Wyoming	2,613.9	399.8	2,075.1	139.0
Rhode Island	2,616.6	546.2	1,842.3	228.1
Minnesota	2,653.6	489.6	2,002.0	162.0
Colorado	2,683.6	532.5	1,900.5	250.6
West Virginia	2,706.2	698.4	1,842.9	164.9
California	2,728.2	622.1	1,662.5	443.6
Michigan	2,856.3	768.1	1,790.5	297.7
Nebraska	2,878.4	499.4	2,171.8	207.1
Alaska	2,934.5	514.2	2,178.9	241.5
Oregon	2,987.3	513.0	2,212.8	261.5
Nevada	3,060.4	835.7	1,756.1	468.6
Illinois	3,185.7	720.6	2,188.1	276.9
Maryland	3,198.4	647.5	2,206.7	344.2
Kansas	3,249.4	690.0	2,341.3	218.2

Arizona	3,302.0	817.3	2,087.6	397.1
Indiana	3,305.6	815.9	2,256.3	233.4
Utah	3,308.8	548.7	2,509.0	251.1
Mississippi	3,335.9	1,085.2	2,037.7	213.0
Ohio	3,337.0	952.6	2,173.3	211.1
Delaware	3,351.7	784.0	2,352.3	215.4
Missouri	3,422.6	733.5	2,392.9	296.2
Oklahoma	3,637.8	1,044.7	2,305.4	287.7
Hawaii	3,668.7	713.7	2,580.0	375.0
N. Carolina	3,729.7	1,165.6	2,345.1	219.0
Washington	3,745.6	791.9	2,597.1	356.5
Georgia	3,748.0	1,025.2	2,368.9	354.0
Tennessee	3,766.6	1,013.8	2,514.3	238.5
Louisiana	3,820.8	1,036.4	2,517.3	267.1
Florida	3,841.1	981.2	2,588.7	271.2
New Mexico	3,866.0	1,117.3	2,409.4	339.3
Alabama	3,877.6	1,058.9	2,574.0	244.8
Arkansas	3,885.1	1,224.1	2,445.5	215.6
S. Carolina	3,887.1	991.7	2,596.7	298.7
Texas	4,017.2	967.4	2,740.9	308.9
D.C.	4,751.9	616.4	3,213.0	922.5

ⁱ U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Statistical Abstract, Table 308. Crime Rates by State, 2008 and 2009, and by Type, 2009, available at <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0308.pdf> (2012).

ⁱⁱ This average excludes the District of Columbia, which has a violent crime rate that is three times the national average.