

# Arizona Hit-and-Run Overview

## Key Statewide Numbers (2024)

- 16,136 hit-and-run crashes
- Approximately 13% of all crashes ( $\approx$  1 in 8 accidents)
- 86 deaths and over 4,200 injuries
- Around 7% of all traffic deaths involve hit-and-run incidents

Arizona ranks among the highest states in the U.S. for hit-and-run fatality rates.

## Phoenix / Maricopa County Focus

- Approximately 20,000 hit-and-run incidents per year in Phoenix alone
- Nearly half of all crashes in Phoenix may involve fleeing drivers
- Maricopa County accounts for over 60% of all crashes in Arizona

This makes the Phoenix metro area a major concentration zone for hit-and-run activity.

## Demographic Patterns (Drivers)

### Gender

- Male drivers account for approximately 56% of crash involvement
- Around 70% of fatal crash drivers are male

Hit-and-run offenders are disproportionately male.

### Age and Behavioral Trends

- More commonly younger drivers
- Frequently associated with:
  - Unlicensed or suspended drivers (approximately 40%)
  - Driving short distances from home

## Contributing Risk Factors

Hit-and-run incidents are commonly associated with:

- Uninsured motorists (Arizona ranks high nationally)
- DUI or impairment

- Fear of arrest (e.g., warrants, legal concerns)
- Illegal immigrant
- Lack of license or insurance

## **Victim Demographics**

### **High-Risk Groups**

- Pedestrians and cyclists are heavily overrepresented
- Up to approximately 60% of fatal hit-and-run victims are pedestrians
- Roadside workers are increasingly impacted

Hit-and-run incidents are significantly more deadly for individuals outside of vehicles.

## **Trends Over Time**

- Increasing trend in hit-and-run involvement
  - Approximately 15% of crashes involved hit-and-run (2023 high)
- Fatal hit-and-run share is rising
  - Around 7.6% of fatal crashes (2017–2023)

Conclusion: the problem is growing, not stabilizing.

## **Severity and Legal Context (Arizona)**

- Property damage: misdemeanor
- Injury: felony
- Death: serious felony (up to approximately 8.75 years in prison)

## **Race and Data Limitations**

Arizona does not publish a comprehensive statewide dataset breaking down hit-and-run arrests by race.

### **Key Data Gaps**

- Transportation agencies track crash data (age, gender, severity)
- Law enforcement tracks arrests separately
- No centralized or standardized race-based reporting for hit-and-run cases

## What Can Be Inferred

- Arrest data reflects:
  - Local population demographics
  - Policing patterns
  - Identification and clearance rates
- Hit-and-run has a low clearance rate, meaning many offenders are never identified

## Drivers

### Drivers

- Strong predictors include:
  - Gender (male)
  - Age (younger)
  - Behavioral risk factors (DUI, lack of license, lack of insurance)

## Lowest Hit-and-Run Impact States (U.S.)

### Consistently Lowest Rates

- Maine
- Vermont
- New Hampshire
- North Dakota
- South Dakota

### Other Low-Rate States

- Iowa
- Nebraska
- Minnesota
- Wyoming

## Why These States Have Lower Rates

1. Less pedestrian exposure
2. Lower traffic density

3. Higher insurance compliance
4. Less nightlife-related driving activity

## **High-Risk vs. Low-Risk Comparison**

### **Low-Risk States**

- Rural
- Smaller populations
- Less congestion
- Lower anonymity for drivers

### **High-Risk States (e.g., Arizona, California, Nevada)**

- Large metropolitan areas
- High pedestrian activity
- Higher uninsured driver rates
- Increased nighttime urban driving

## **Key Takeaways**

- Arizona has one of the highest hit-and-run rates in the United States
- Offenders are most commonly younger male drivers
- Pedestrians and cyclists face the highest fatality risk
- Phoenix and Maricopa County are major hotspots
- The problem is increasing over time
- Race data for offenders is inconclusive

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