

Mass Shootings Definition, Crime

“Mass shooting, as defined by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), is an event in which one or more individuals are actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area. Implicit in this definition is the shooter’s use of a firearm. The FBI has not set a minimum number of casualties to qualify an event as a mass shooting, but U.S. statute (the Investigative Assistance for Violent Crimes Act of 2012) defines a mass killing as 3 or more killings in a single incident. For the purposes of this article, both sets of criteria are applied to the term mass shooting, with the distinction that the shooter or shooters are not included in any fatality statistics.”

Source

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/mass-shooting>

Gun Violence Overview (Britannica ProCon)

According to Britannica ProCon.org, over 823000 people died from gun violence in the United States between 2001 and 2023. This includes approximately 480000 suicides and 312000 homicides. Guns are used in 71.5 percent of homicides and 51.8 percent of suicides, with mass shootings defined as 3 or more killings contributing hundreds of deaths.

Key Gun Violence Statistics

Total Deaths 2001 to 2023

823204 total deaths

480573 suicides

312380 homicides

13268 unintentional deaths

Daily Impact

An average of over 42 people are killed by gun violence each day

Mass Shootings

More than 1000 people have been killed in mass shootings since 1982

Gun Source

77 percent of shooters in 167 analyzed mass shootings from 1966 to 2019 used legally obtained firearms

International Perspective

The United States has over 63709 legal gun stores, more than any other country

Trends and Context

Homicide Trends

Firearm homicide rates declined between 1993 and 2014, then increased in subsequent years

Public Opinion

85 percent of gun owners support universal background checks according to a March 2025 poll

School Shootings

Incidents in the 1990s, including the Columbine shooting in 1999, marked a turning point in national awareness

Common Definitions and Data**Mass Shooting**

Generally defined as 3 or more killings in a single incident

Gun Control Debate

Centers on the Second Amendment and differing views on regulation and public safety

Source:

<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/topic-pages/tables/table-43>