

INKLINGS

Preliminary Results from the 2001 NHTS

Federal Highway
Administration
and
The Bureau of
Transportation
Statistics

Changes in Demographics and Travel

Continuing a long-term trend we've seen since the 1960s, households are getting smaller, they have more vehicles, more drivers and generate more miles than ever, according to the preliminary data from the National Household Travel Survey. Overall, Americans are spending more time everyday traveling, and traveling farther for each trip.

The number of daily trips per person remained about the same as in 1995, but the average distance of daily trips increased. The preliminary data shows that the average length of a vehicle trip went from 8.8 miles in 1990 to 9.1 miles in 1995 to 9.8 miles in 2001. The longest vehicle trips were to visit friends and family (16 miles), followed by trips to work (12 miles) and trips for medical and dental purposes (11 miles).

“On average American drivers spend more than 81 minutes a day behind the wheel.”

People aged 16 and older are traveling over an hour and a half (95 minutes) by all modes and for all reasons each day—about ten minutes more a day than in 1995. For people who drove on the travel day, more than 81 minutes were spent behind the wheel in 2001, compared to 73 minutes in 1995.

The preliminary data shows that drivers are behind the wheel nearly 14,000 miles a year, an increase of 60 percent since 1969. People ages 35-54 travel the most—those people most likely to be workers, drivers, and householders.

Demographic Indicators 1969—2001

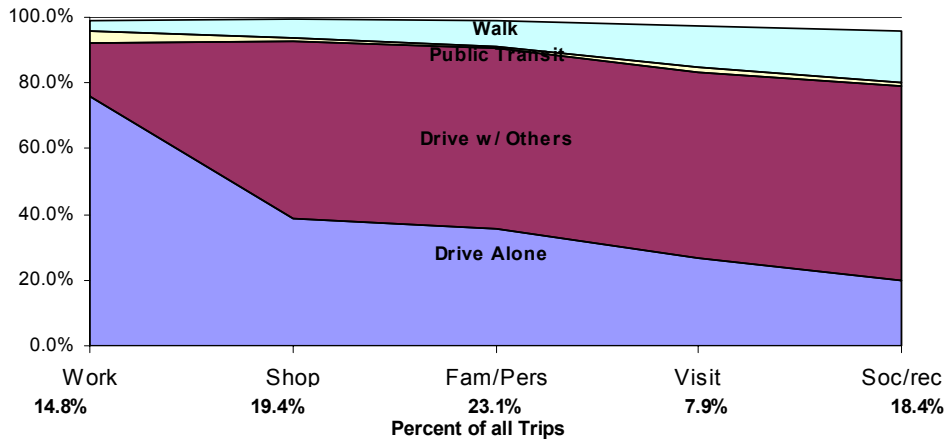
	1969	1977	1983	1990	1995	2001
Persons/HH	3.16	2.83	2.69	2.56	2.63	2.58
Vehicles/HH	1.16	1.59	1.68	1.77	1.78	1.90
Vehicles/Driver	0.70	0.94	0.98	1.01	1.00	1.07
Workers/Person	0.38	0.44	0.45	0.49	0.51	0.52
Annual Miles/Driver	8,685	10,006	10,536	13,125	13,476	13,836



Mode and Purpose

We travel for a wide variety of reasons—to work, to school, to visit friends. And we travel in many ways—driving alone, in a car with others, bus or train, and walking. Seventy-six percent of our trips to work are made driving alone, but only 14.8 percent of all travel is to and from work—19.4 percent of reported trips are to shop, 23.1 for family errands, 9.7 percent to visit friends and relatives, and 18.4 for social and recreational activities. The majority of these trips are made with others in a private vehicle.

Proportion of Trips by Mode and Purpose

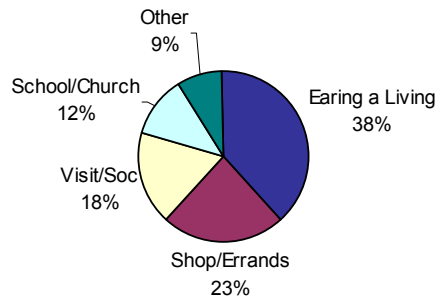


Transit

Transit use, which tends to be concentrated in the largest metro areas, is highly dependent on route and time of day considerations. About 38 percent of transit trips are work-related, almost a quarter are for shopping and errands, and another 18 percent are social.

Transit has strong ridership peaks during the 6:00 to 9:00 am and 3:00 to 6:00 pm periods, where nearly one-half of passengers travel.

Trips on Transit by Purpose



Vehicle Type and Age

The vehicle fleet is slowly changing. Automobiles are a shrinking proportion of the fleet mix, while the number of SUVs, vans, and pickups continues to grow.

Americans are keeping their cars longer, the average vehicle on the street is nearly nine years old. Average vehicle age went from 6.6 years in 1969 to nearly 9 years in 2001. Older vehicles are also being driven more miles than before, due to their continued presence in the fleet mix and the increased use of almost all vehicles.

“Americans are keeping their cars longer; the average vehicle on the road is now nearly 9 years old.”

Average Vehicle Age 1969—2001

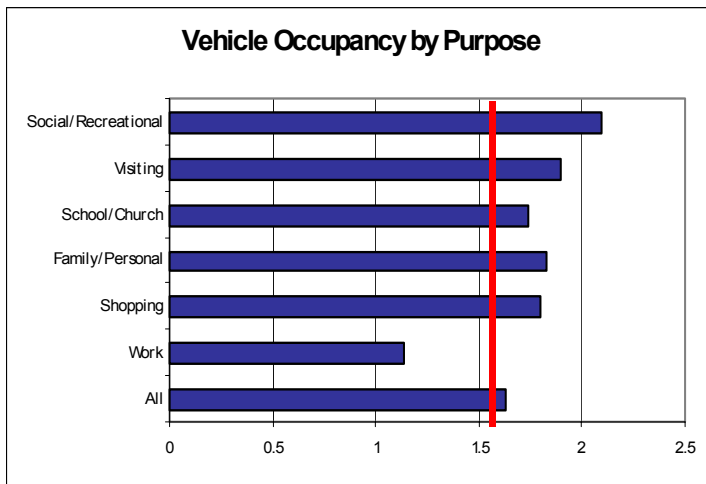
Vehicle Type	1969	1977	1990	1995	2001
ALL	6.6	7.6	7.7	8.3	8.9
Automobile	6.4	7.2	7.6	8.2	9.0
Van	5.5	8.5	5.9	6.7	7.6
Pick-up	7.3	8.5	8.4	9.7	10.1
SUV	--	--	--	6.7	6.5

Vehicle Occupancy

Travel by private vehicle accounts for 86 percent of all person trips in 2001—38 percent of all trips are drive alone and 48 percent are in multi-occupant vehicles. Vehicle occupancy is calculated from the product of the trip length times the number of persons on the trip—that is a 2-person trip of 12 miles has six times the

weight of a 2-person trip of 2 miles. Using this method, the preliminary 2001 NHTS shows that overall vehicle occupancy is 1.63 persons per person miles.

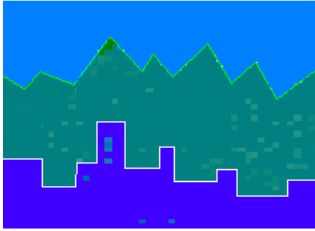
Many of our perceptions of travel tend to focus on the trips to work, and auto occupancy is no exception. Work trips continue to have the lowest occupancy, but have remained unchanged (at 1.14 person miles per vehicle mile) since 1995.



Federal Highway Administration
and
The Bureau of Transportation

Walk Trips

National Household



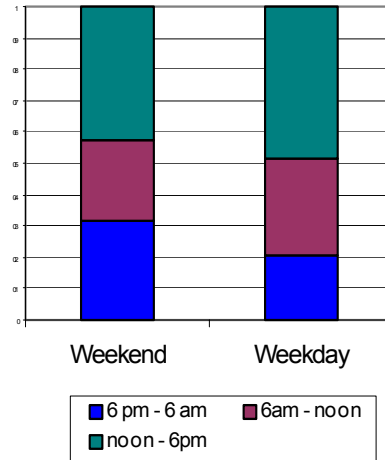
Travel Survey

The 2001 NHTS obtained more detail on walk trips made by Americans than previous surveys in the series. Overall, 8.5 percent of the trips reported were walk trips, although nearly one-third of adults in U.S. households did not take any walk trips in the last week.

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[Http://nhts.ornl.gov](http://nhts.ornl.gov)

Forty percent of all walk trips take place on the weekend, almost half of those are made on weekend afternoons. Overall, about 18 percent of all trips by all modes are made for social and recreational purposes, such as going to the movies or to exercise, compared to one-third of walk trips.

Proportion of Walk Trips



Travel by Older Americans

Thirteen percent of the U.S. population is 65 years and over, and the proportion of older Americans is projected to grow to 20 percent in the next three decades.

The type and amount of travel people do changes with age. Women make a quarter less daily trips after age 65, and drive only about a third as much as younger women. Older men's travel does not decline as sharply—they drive about half as much as younger men. As health care and longevity increase, we may find that the aging baby-boomers do not follow past trends.

The purpose of travel also changes as we age. Older travelers make a greater proportion of shopping trips, more family and personal errands, and more trips for social and recreational activities than younger travelers.

Purpose of Travel by Age

