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Subject: OLDER AMERICANS CRIME REPORT.

Study: Older Americans Avoid Crime

By Michael J. Sniffen
Associated Press Writer
Sunday, Jan. 9, 2000; 4:30 p.m. EST

WASHINGTON — Violent criminals attack Americans age 65 or older far less often than younger men and women, probably because older people do not go out at night as much, the Justice Department reported Sunday.

There were an average of 5.3 violent crimes for every 1,000 U.S. residents age 65 or older each year from 1992 through 1997, the department's Bureau of Justice Statistics said.

That was less than one-tenth the rate of violent attacks on younger Americans. Those age 12 through 64 suffered an annual average of 56 violent attacks for every 1,000 residents during each of the same six years.

The data were based on Census Bureau interviews every six months during the period with 85,000 Americans age 12 and older. In 1997, the elderly, defined by the report as those age 65 or older, made up 12.7 percent of the U.S. population, but they accounted for only 7 percent of the crime victims identified in the interviews.

The report's author, BJS statistician Patsy A. Klaus, wrote that differences in lifestyle appeared to play a major role in the incidence of violent crime.

"Elderly victims of nonlethal violence were less likely than younger victims to go out at night," she wrote. About 22 percent of elderly violence victims reported they never went out at night for entertainment, shopping or other activities. By comparison, only 3 percent of violence victims under age 50 stayed home at night.

Klaus also found the elderly were less likely than younger people to fight back when attacked. Only 49 percent of elderly violence victims reported arguing with the offender, running away, calling for help or attacking the offender. By comparison, more than 70 percent of those under age 50 took some self-protective step.

Crimes against the elderly were more likely to occur in or near their homes and in the day rather than the night, compared with crimes against younger victims. Among elderly violent crime victims, 70 percent of the attacks occurred in daytime. For all younger victims, daylight attacks made up less than 60 percent of the total, and for those age 25 to 49, less than 50 percent of the total.

Also, violent attacks near home represented 43 percent of those against the elderly and only 26 percent of those against younger people.

The elderly had lower victimization rates than younger people for every type of violent and property crime measured by the victimization interviews: rape, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, household burglary, auto theft and theft.

But the Census Bureau does not conduct victimization interviews in institutions, so crimes against people in nursing homes are not counted in the estimates, the Justice Department noted. In 1995, 4 percent of the elderly, or 1.4 million people 65 or older, were in nursing homes or long-term care institutions.

The interviews also do not cover fraud and thus do not measure the victimization of the elderly by telemarketers. Experts believe older people account for the overwhelming majority of telephone fraud victims.

Of all crimes reported by older people during the six-year period, 92 percent were property crimes, compared with 72 percent property crimes for younger Americans.

During the study period, there was an annual average of 2.5 million burglaries, thefts and auto thefts against the elderly, 46,090 purse snatchings or pocket pickings, 165,330 nonlethal violent crimes and 1,000 murders. The murder data comes from FBI statistics reported by police departments.

Among the elderly, higher victimization rates were reported by blacks than whites, Hispanics than non-Hispanics, and elderly men than elderly women.

Of the annual average of 165,330 elderly people who suffered nonlethal violence, 22 percent were injured and 6 percent received treatment at a hospital. Among victims of violence, the rate of serious injury – gunshots and stab wounds, broken bones, unconsciousness – was the about the same, 13 percent, for the elderly as the overall population.

A weapon was somewhat more likely to be used in violent attacks on the elderly than on younger people.



Bureau of Justice Statistics

Crimes against Persons Age 65 or Older, 1992-97

- **Trends**
- **Gender, race, and income**
- **Victim-offender relationship**
- **Crimes of violence**
- **Property crimes**
- **Reporting to police**

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This Bureau of Justice Statistics report was written by Patsy A. Klaus. Cathy Maston verified the data. Tom Hester produced the report, with graphic assistance from the BJS editorial team of Yvonne Boston, Tina Dorsey, Ida Hines, and Rhonda Keith. Jayne Robinson prepared the report for printing.

The International Year of Older Persons

The General Assembly of the United Nations observed the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons "in recognition of humanity's demographic coming of age and the promise it holds for maturing attitudes and capabilities in social, economic, cultural and spiritual undertakings...." (Resolution 47/5)

The year's theme was "Towards a Society for All Ages." "A society for all ages is one that does not caricature older persons as patients and pensioners. Instead, it sees them as both agents and beneficiaries of development." — Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, October 1, 1998

The Bureau of Justice Statistics presents this comprehensive report about criminal victimization of persons age 65 or older in the context of a society with appropriate concerns for all age groups.

Jan M. Chaiken, Ph.D.
Director

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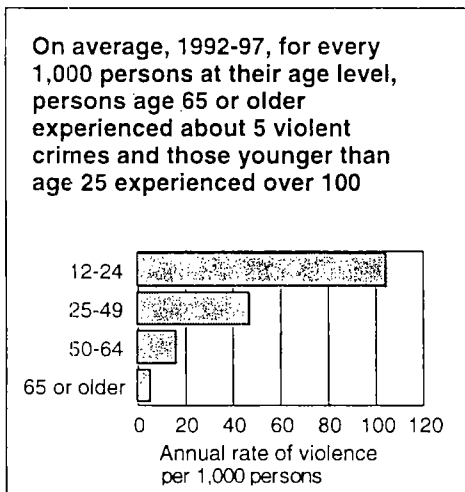
Crimes against Persons Age 65 or Older, 1992-97

by Patsy A. Klaus
BJS Statistician

December 1999, NCJ 176352

Highlights

The elderly, persons age 65 or older, experienced less violence and fewer property crimes than younger persons



Between 1992 and 1997 the average population of persons age 65 or older was 31.3 million. These elderly were victims of 2.7 million property and violent crimes, either completed or attempted —

- 2.5 million property crimes (household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and household theft)
- 46,000 purse snatchings or pocket pickings
- 166,000 nonlethal violent crimes (rape, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault)
- 1,000 murders

(These annual averages describe data aggregated across the 6 years, providing a large enough number of cases for more detailed analyses. See page 27 for further explanation.)

When compared with other age groups, the elderly were disproportionately affected by property crimes. More than 9 in 10 crimes against the elderly were property crimes, compared to fewer than 4 in 10 crimes against persons age 12 to 24.

The elderly made up 15% of the population age 12 or older, but accounted for 7% of measured crimes.

Robbery accounted for a quarter of the violent crimes against persons age 65 or older, but less than an eighth of the violent crimes experienced by those age 12-64.

In general, compared with crime incidents involving other age groups, most crimes against the elderly were more likely to occur in or near their homes, and to occur in daylight hours.

Differences in lifestyle may account in part for when and where crimes against the elderly occurred. For example, victims of nonlethal violence who said that they never went out at night for entertainment, work, shopping or other similar activities included —

- 22% of victims age 65 or older
- About 3% of victims in age groups under 50.

Elderly victims of nonlethal violence were less likely than younger victims to go out at night.

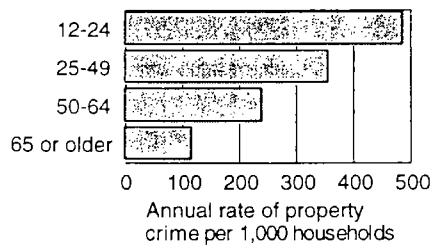
Compared with violent crime victims in other age groups, elderly victims of nonlethal violence were less likely to use self-protective measures, such as arguing with the offender, running away, calling for help, or attacking the offender.

Age of victim	Percent of victims of nonlethal violence resisting the offender
All ages	71%
12-24	71
25-49	73
50-64	69
65 or older	49

More than 1 in 5 elderly victims of nonlethal violence sustained injuries.

For some crimes, such as overall violence, the elderly were more likely to report crimes to police than victims in other age groups. In all age groups, however, many crimes were not reported.

On average from 1992 to 1997, the rate of property crime for persons age 65 or older was less than a fourth that of the young (117 crimes per 1,000 elderly households and 480 crimes per 1,000 households of the young)



Measuring crime against persons age 65 or older

"The elderly," a synonym for persons age 65 or older, comprise over 1 in 8 U.S. residents

The term "elderly," when used as a synonym in this report, refers to persons age 65 or older.

In 1997 persons age 65 or older made up 12.7% of the United States population.

In 1995 about 4% of persons age 65 or older, or 1.4 million, resided in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities.

Persons age 65 or older made up 89% of all persons in nursing homes in 1995. Although this age group is disproportionately represented in the population of this type of institution, other age groups are disproportionately represented in other types, such as prisons.

Households form basis for National Crime Victimization Survey

The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) does not interview members of any type of institutionalized population. Crimes occurring in these settings are missed. In particular, violence, abuse, neglect, theft, or other victimization of older persons in nursing homes are not measured through this survey.

Crimes measured by the NCVS include rape and sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, purse snatching and pocket picking, household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft from the home or car. The NCVS does not measure

Household head

The NCVS relies on one person in a household to report the household crimes of burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft. The term "household head" designates this person in analyzing findings about property crime from the NCVS. The household head concept is used because the crimes are assumed to be against an entire household rather than a single victim.

A household head is nearly always an adult, and can be either male or female.

kidnaping, crimes against businesses, fraud (including telemarketing scams), and other economic or "white collar" crimes.

Some experts believe that some economic crimes, such as fraud, disproportionately impact persons age 65 or older. The NCVS does not collect data to support or dispute this observation.

The elderly generally experienced crime at lower rates than persons in other age categories

Although persons age 65 or older made up 15% of the population age 12 or older between 1992 and 1997, they accounted for about 7% of all crime measured by NCVS during that period.

For violent crimes, in particular, the elderly experienced much lower rates than other age groups. On average between 1992 and 1997, 5 persons

per 1,000, age 65 or older, experienced a violent crime (including murder, rape or sexual assault, robbery, or aggravated or simple assault). For persons ages 50-64, the overall violence rate was 16 per 1,000 persons, compared with 47 per 1,000 persons ages 25-49 and 105 per 1,000 persons ages 12-24. Most data in this report are presented as an annual average of 6 years of surveys because of the relatively small number of sample cases from a single year.

The one crime category which affected the elderly at about the same rate as most others in the population (except those ages 12-24) was personal theft, which includes purse snatching and pocket picking.

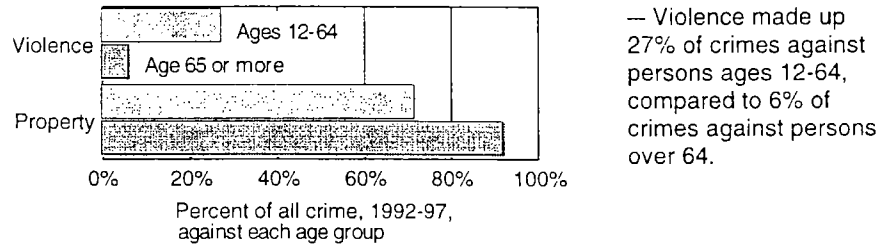
Not only were the elderly victimized less often, but a greater percentage of victimizations against the elderly, compared to those against younger persons, were property crimes. Of all victimizations from 1992 to 1997, 92% of those reported by a person age 65 or older were property crimes, versus 72% of those reported by a person under age 65.

Type of victimization	Percent of victimizations, 1992-97, by victims or heads of households —	
	Age 65 or older	Ages 12-64
Violent	6.2%	27.3%
Pocket picking/ purse snatching	1.7	0.9
Property	92.1	71.8

Victimizations of persons age 65 or older or of households with a head of household age 65 or older		
	Average number per year, 1992-97	Percent
Total crimes	2,694,290	100.0%
Personal crimes	212,420	7.9%
Crimes of violence	166,330	6.2
Murder	1,000	0.04
Nonfatal violence	165,330	6.1
Rape/Sexual assault	3,280	0.12
Robbery	40,950	1.5
Total assault	121,100	4.5
Aggravated assault	34,050	1.3
Simple assault	87,050	3.2
Personal theft	46,090	1.7
Number of persons age 65 or older	31,296,350	
Property crimes	2,481,870	92.1%
Household burglary	623,790	23.2
Motor vehicle theft	124,930	4.6
Theft	1,733,160	64.3
Households heads age 65 or older	21,161,850	

Prevalence of crime, 1992-97

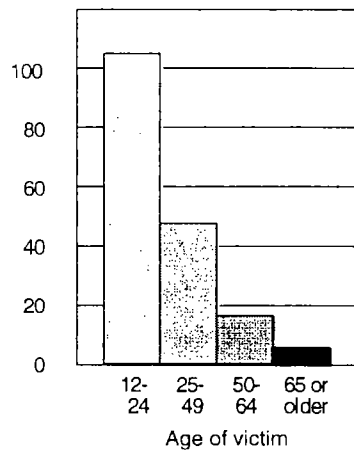
Property crime, not violence, provided the highest percentage of crime against persons age 65 or older



Compared with other age groups, persons over 64 had lower rates overall for both violent and property crime

5.3 violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 65 or older — about a tenth the rate for persons younger than 65

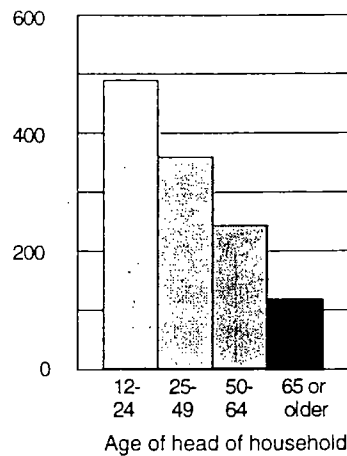
Rate of violent crime per 1,000 persons



Violence includes murder, rape and sexual assault, robbery, and simple and aggravated assault.

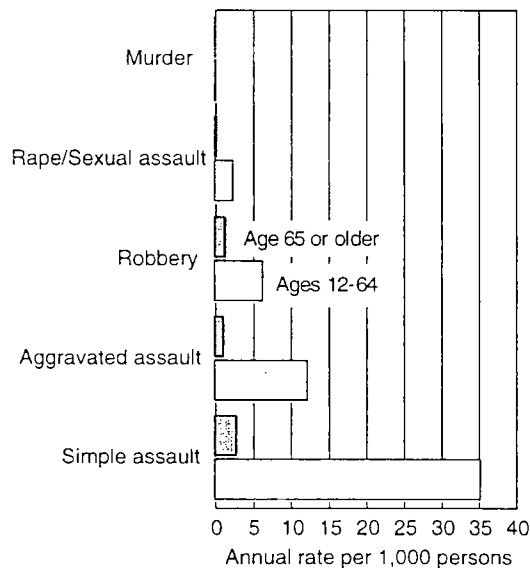
117.3 property crimes per 1,000 households with a household head age 65 or older — about a third the rate for younger households

Rate of property crime per 1,000 households



Property crime includes household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft.

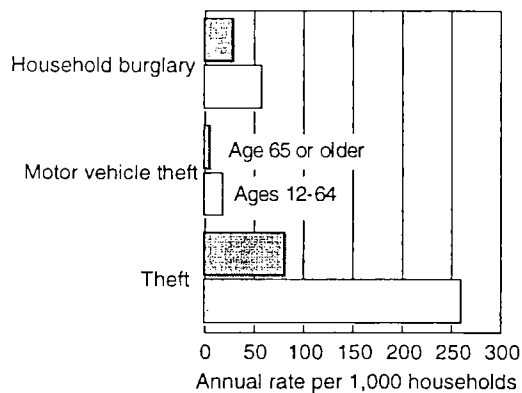
The elderly had lower victimization rates than other age groups for all types of violent and property crime measured by the NCVS, 1992-97



Compared to persons ages 12-64, the elderly were —

— About 5 times less likely to be victims of robbery

— About 12 times less likely to be victims of aggravated or simple assault.



Compared to households with a head under age 65, elderly households were —

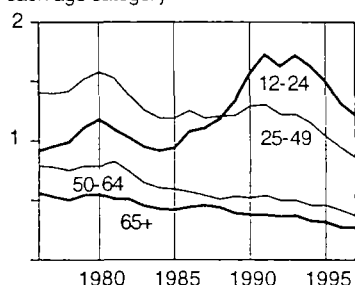
— About half as likely to be victims of burglary

— About 3 times less likely to be victims of motor vehicle theft or theft.

Declining rates of crime for persons age 65 or older, 1973-97

Rates of murder against persons age 65 or older declined after 1976 while those against persons ages 12-24 fluctuated

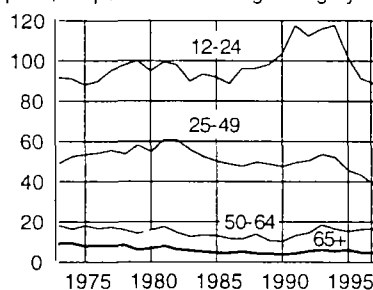
Murder rate per 10,000 persons in each age category



The murder rate for persons age 65 or older declined by half, from 0.56 murders per 10,000 persons in 1976 to 0.27 per 10,000 in 1997.

Rates of nonfatal violence against persons age 65 or older declined, 1973-97

Rate of violent victimizations per 1,000 persons in each age category

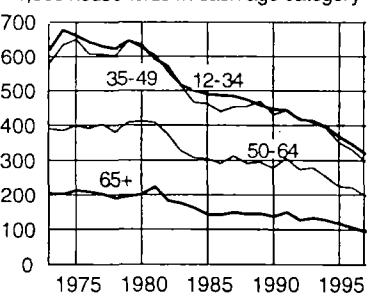


In 1973 persons age 65 or older were assaulted or robbed at a rate of 9 victimizations per 1,000 persons. (This rate is weighted to adjust for NCVS questions changed in 1992. See the methodology section on page 26.)

By 1997 the rate had fallen to 4.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons.

For households with a person age 65 or older as head, property crimes in 1997 occurred at half the 1973 rate

Rate of property victimizations per 1,000 households in each age category

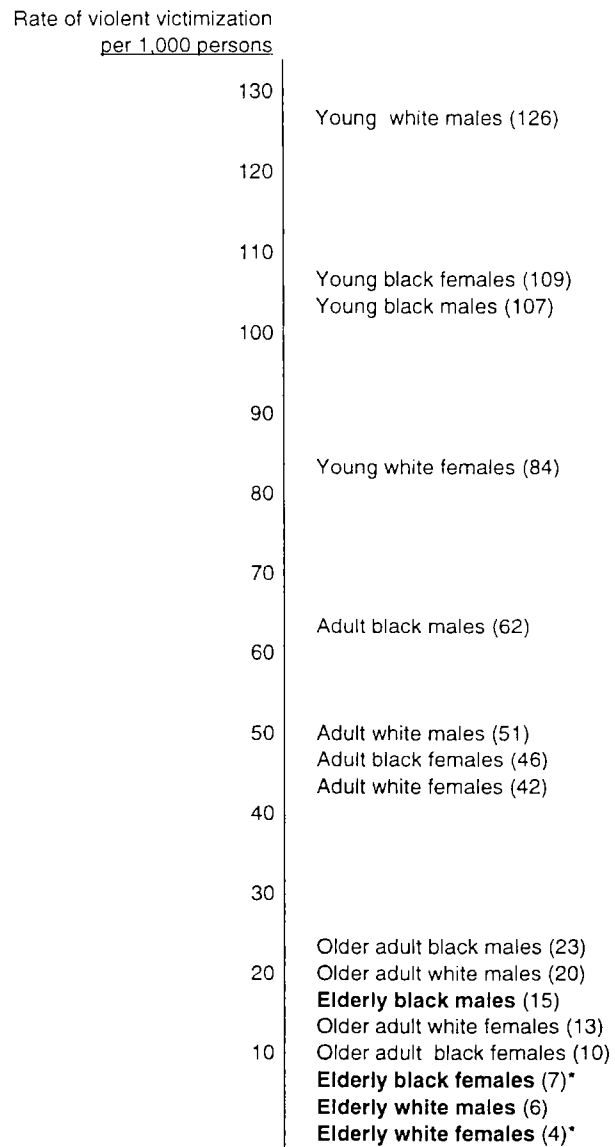


Rates of property crimes (burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft) against households with an elderly head of household:

205 per 1,000 households in 1973
96 per 1,000 in 1997.

Comparing rates of nonlethal violence

White women age 65 or older had the lowest rate of nonlethal violent victimization, 1992-97

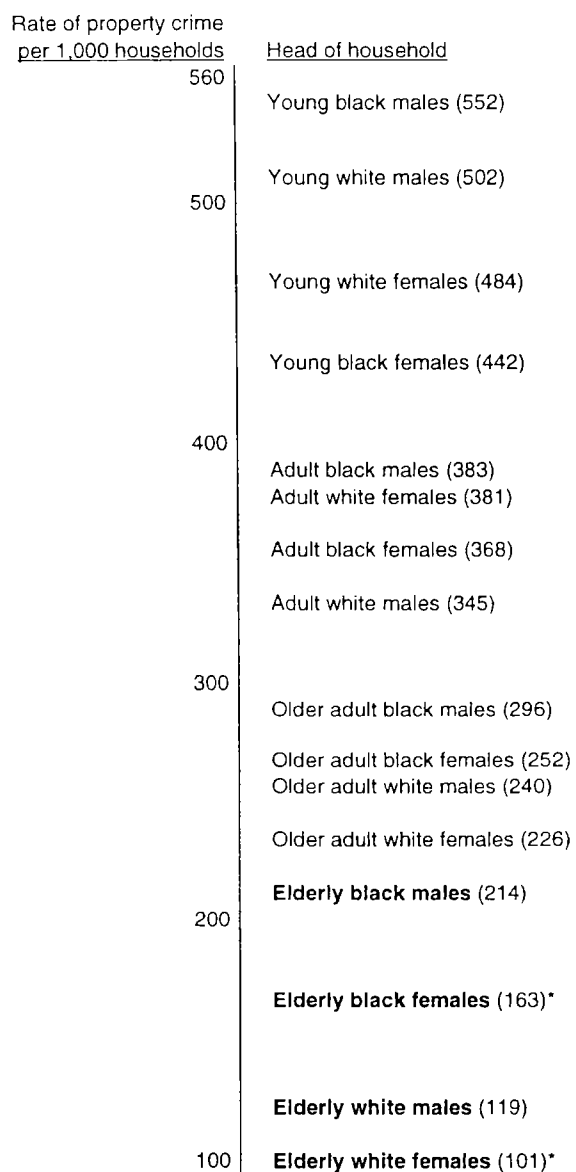


Note: This report applies the following age categories: ♦ Young (ages 12-24)
♦ Adult (ages 24-49) ♦ Older adult (ages 50-64) ♦ Elderly (age 65 or older)

*The apparent difference between elderly females is not statistically significant.

Comparing rates of property crime

Households with a white female head of household age 65 or older had the lowest property crime rates, 1992-97

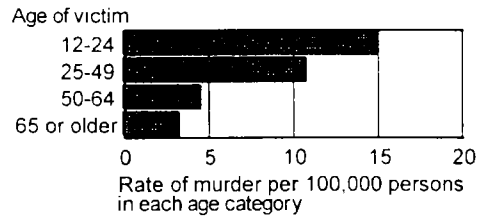


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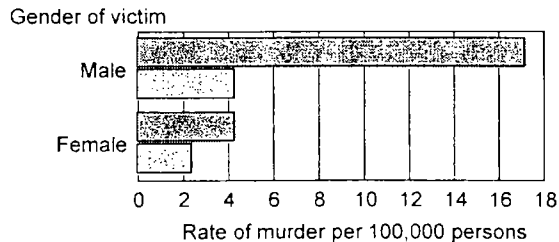
Victims of murder, 1992-97

Each year between 1992 and 1997, about 3 per 100,000 persons age 65 or older were murdered



Persons ages 12-24 were about 5 times as likely as the elderly to be murdered. Persons ages 25-49 were over 3 times as likely.

In every age category, the rate of murder for males was about double that for females



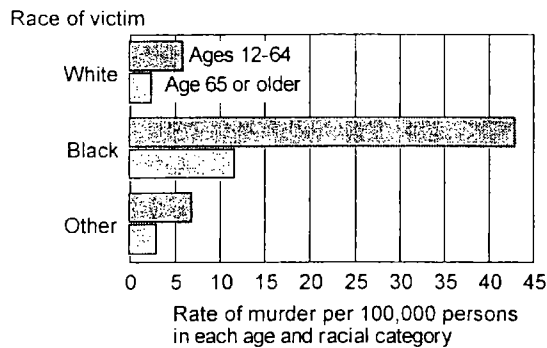
For every 100,000 persons age 65 or older —

Males — 4 murders
Females — 2 murders

For every 100,000 persons ages 12-64 —

Males — 17 murders
Females — 4 murders

Whites were the least likely of the racial groups to be victims of murder, regardless of age



For every 100,000 persons age 65 or older —

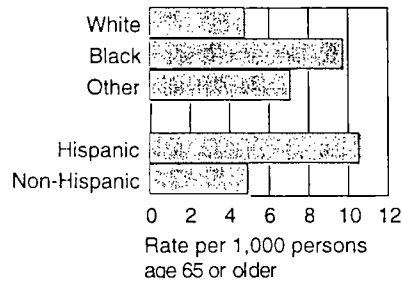
White — 2 murders
Black — 12 murders
Other — 3 murders

For every 100,000 persons ages 12-64 —

White — 6 murders
Black — 43 murders
Other — 7 murders

Victims of nonlethal violence, 1992-97

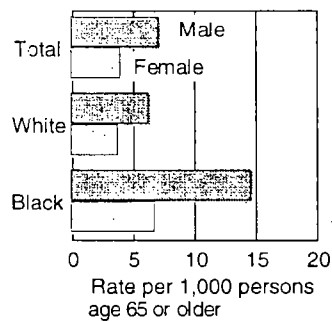
Among elderly victims of nonlethal violence, blacks experienced higher rates than whites, and Hispanics experienced higher rates than non-Hispanics



On average each year, 1992-97, the number of nonlethal violent crimes for every 1,000 elderly persons in each category —
 10 crimes against blacks
 5 against whites

11 crimes against Hispanics
 5 crimes against non-Hispanics

Elderly men experienced higher rates of nonlethal violence than elderly women

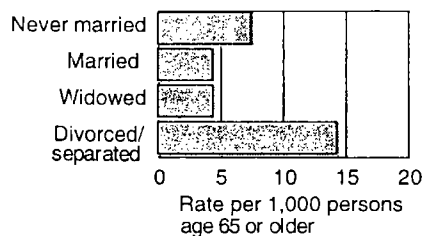


On average each year, 1992-97, the number of nonlethal violent crimes for every 1,000 elderly persons in each category —
 15 crimes against black men
 6 crimes against white men

7 crimes against black women*
 4 crimes against white women*

*The apparent difference between elderly women is not statistically significant.

Divorced or separated elderly persons had higher rates of nonlethal violence than those who were married or widowed

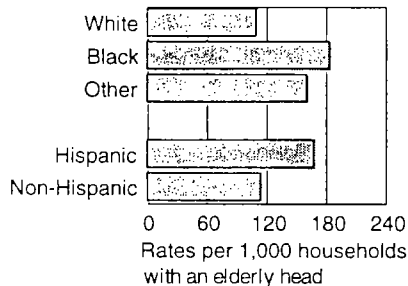


On average each year, 1992-97, the number of nonlethal violent crimes for every 1,000 elderly persons in each category —

14 crimes against divorced/separated
 4 crimes against married or widowed

Victims of property crime, 1992-97

Property crime rates for households with an elderly head of household were higher for blacks and Hispanics

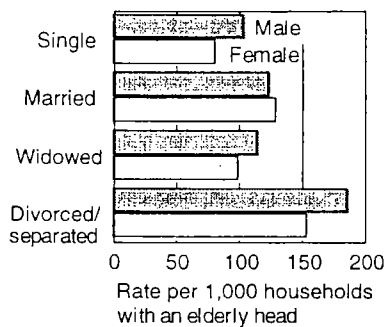


On average each year, 1992-97, for every 1,000 households with an elderly head of household, the number of property crimes in each category —

184 crimes against black households
110 crimes against white households

168 crimes against Hispanic households
115 crimes against non-Hispanics.

Among households having a head of household age 65 or older, higher rates of property crime victimization were associated with divorced or separated persons rather than with married or never married persons

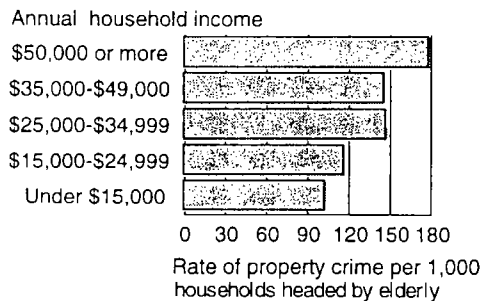


On average each year, 1992-97, for every 1,000 households with an elderly head of household, the number of property crimes in each category —

186 crimes against households headed by a divorced or separated man

154 crimes against households headed by a divorced or separated woman.

Among households with an elderly head of household, property crime rates were higher in those having annual incomes over \$50,000



On average each year, 1992-97, for every 1,000 households with an elderly head of household, the number of property crimes ranged from —

103 crimes against households with less than \$15,000 per year

to —
179 crimes against households with more than \$50,000 per year.

Victimization by those whom the victim knew well

There is much interest in measuring what is often called "elder abuse." The general concept involved in the numerous definitions of "elder abuse" is that the victim is injured, neglected, or exploited because of vulnerabilities associated with age, such as impaired physical or mental capacities.

The NCVS cannot accurately measure this category of crime, which is difficult to determine using any methodology. A mentally impaired person may not be able to report a victimization or to describe its details. If the victimization is reported, the report might not be believed. Victims dependent on abusive caretakers may not feel free to report the abuse. Financial exploitation, including theft or fraud, may occur without the victim's knowledge.

The NCVS does measure violent crimes committed against persons age 65 or older by relatives, intimates, or persons well known to the victim. The NCVS includes crimes occurring to persons living in households but not in institutional settings, such as nursing homes. Data on these violent crimes are presented to provide some information on crimes that might be part of "elder abuse."

Information about murder comes from the Uniform Crime Reports.

Information is presented on murders that relatives or intimates or persons known to the victim committed against victims age 65 or older.

For the persons age 65 or older, as for other age groups, most violence measured by the NCVS is simple assault. Simple assault is defined as an attack without a weapon, resulting either in no injury or in a minor injury, such as cuts or bruises. Simple assault includes attempted attacks and verbal threats to attack or kill the victim.

Each year on average between 1992 and 1997, a relative, intimate, or close acquaintance injured about 36,000 persons age 65 or older and killed about 500

	Average annual elderly victims per year, 1992-97
Nonlethal violence committed by —	
Total	36,290
Relatives and intimates	15,040
Others well known to victim	21,250
Murder committed by —	
Total	500
Relatives and intimates	260
Others known to victim	240

When faced with violence by a relative, intimate, or close acquaintance, about two-thirds of the elderly victims were at home, about two-thirds avoided injury, and about half used some self-protective measure

	Nonlethal violence against persons age 65 or older	
	By relatives or others well known to victim	By strangers or casual acquaintances
Weapon used by offender	19.5%*	32.9%
Self protection used by victim	47.4	49.6
Victim injured	30.7	22.1
Occurred in victims' home	68.8	43.2
Occurred in daytime	63.0	70.3

*Estimate based on 10 or fewer cases.

When comparing nonlethal violence committed by relatives or persons well known to the victim with other nonlethal violence against persons age 65 or older, 1992-97:

- There were no significant differences in whether the victims used self-protective measures.
- Injury appeared to be more likely for violence by relatives or well-known offenders, although the difference was not statistically significant.
- Violence by relatives or persons well known to the victim was more likely to occur in the victim's home.

**Relatives or intimates committed more than
1 in 4 of the murders and 1 in 10 of the incidents
of nonlethal violence against persons age 65 or older**

**Victims of murder over age 64 were 2 times
more likely than victims between ages 12 and 64
to have been killed by relatives or intimates, 1992-97**

Type of violence and victim-offender relationship	Age of victim	
	65 or older	12-64
Murder	100.0%	100.0%
Nonstranger total	50.1	45.8
Relative, intimate	26.4	13.5
Other known	23.7	32.3
Stranger	14.6	14.3
Unknown relationship	35.3	39.9
Total nonlethal violence	100.0%	100.0%
Relatives or intimates	9.1	15.0
Well known	12.9	15.3
Casual acquaintances	14.5	18.0
Strangers	56.2	48.4
Unknown relationship	7.4	3.3

Note: "Other known" murder victims includes a wide variety of relationships. These data cannot be classified into "well known" and "casual acquaintances." For nonlethal violence, the victim identified the nature of the relationship as "well known" or "casual acquaintance."

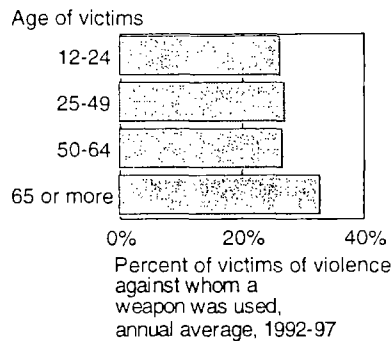
Weapons used against victims, 1992-97

Elderly victims were much less likely than younger victims to be murdered with a firearm, 1992-97

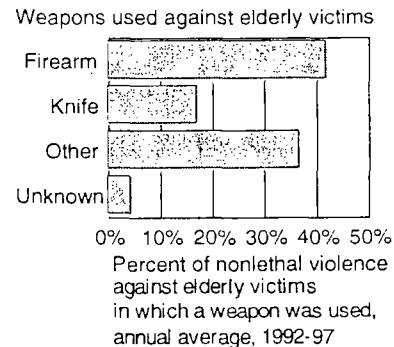
	Age of victim	
	65 or older	12 -64
All weapons/methods	100.0%	100.0%
Firearm	36.1	73.0
Knife	22.3	13.2
Blunt object	13.4	3.9
Other or no weapon*	19.2	5.9
Unknown	9.1	3.9

*Includes many other methods, such as suffocation, drowning, poisoning, and other methods, in which a weapon may not have been used.

Weapons were somewhat more likely to be used against elderly victims of nonlethal violence than against younger victims



Firearms comprised more than 40% of the weapons used against the elderly in nonlethal violence



Among victims of nonlethal violence, the elderly were less likely than younger victims to have protected themselves in some way or to have resisted the offender, 1992-97

All age groups	Percent of all victims of violence who resisted
	71.4%
12 - 24	71.1
25 - 49	72.7
50 - 64	68.6
65 or older	49.4

Injury from violence, 1992-97

Victims of violence age 25 or older had a similar likelihood of injury

Age of victim of nonlethal violence	Percent of violence with injury
12 - 24	28.3%
25 - 49	23.5
50 - 64	17.5
65 or older	22.1

Elderly persons were about as likely as younger persons to sustain severe injuries from nonlethal violence, 1992-97

Age of victim	Percent of injured victims of violence			
	Serious injury ^a	Minor injury ^b	Rape/sexual assault without other injury	Severity unknown
All ages	13.2%	81.8%	4.5%	0.5%
12 - 24	11.5	83.9	4.3	0.3*
25 - 49	14.6	79.5	5.1	0.8
50 - 64	21.5	77.0	1.1*	0.4
65 or older	12.9	85.2	1.9*	0*

Note: Differences between age categories are not statistically significant.

*Based on 10 or fewer cases.

^aSerious injury includes gunshot, knife, or stab wounds, internal injuries, broken bones, or being knocked unconscious.

^bMinor injury includes bruises, scratches, and cuts.

On average each year 1992-97, of persons age 65 or older who reported being a victim of violence, 22% were injured and 1% were hospitalized overnight

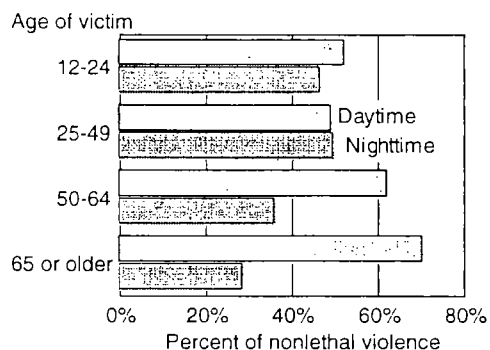
Not injured	Injured				
77.9%	22.1%				
	Not treated	Treated			
	10.9%	11.2%			
		At scene	Doctor's office*	Hospital	Elsewhere*
		2.9%	2.1%	5.6%	0.6%
				Released from emergency room	Hospitalized*
				4.7%	0.9%

*Based on 10 or fewer cases.

- More than three-fourths of elderly nonlethal violence victims were not injured.
- About 11% of all nonlethal violence against the elderly resulted in medical treatment.
- About 6% of all elderly victims of nonlethal violence went to the hospital for emergency room care or other type of treatment.

Characteristics of violent victimizations, 1992-97

70% of nonlethal violence against persons over age 64 occurred during the day

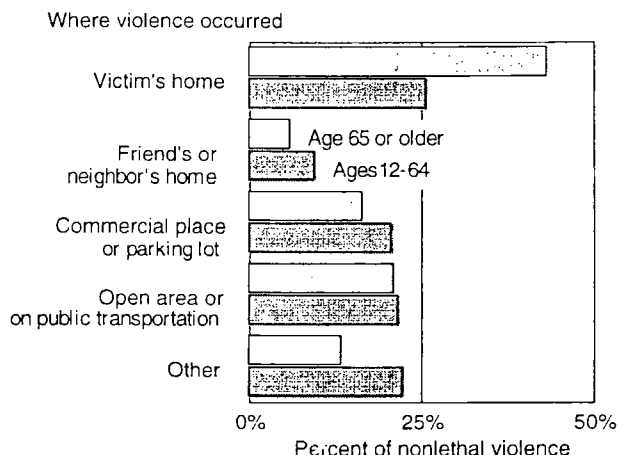


Nonlethal violence was more likely to occur in the day than at night for persons of ages 12 to 24 and 50 or older.

About equal amount of violence against persons ages 25 to 49 at night and during the day.

43% of nonlethal violence against persons over age 64 occurred in or near the victim's home

Nonlethal violence that occurred in or near the victim's home:
43% of elderly victims
26% of victims ages 12-64



Among victims of nonlethal violence, persons age 65 or older were about 6 times more likely than younger persons to "never" go out at night

Percent of victims of violence who went out —	Age of victim	
	65 or more	12-64
Every night	9.5%	37.2%
Weekly	55.7	52.7
Monthly	11.8	6.0
Never	22.0	3.4
Unknown	1.1*	0.7

Persons who said they went out every night accounted for 10% of all elderly victims of violence, compared to 37% of younger persons who were victims of violence.

*Based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

Both murder and nonlethal violence usually involved one victim and one offender

	Age of victim	
	65 or older	12-64
All murders, 1992-97	100.0%	100.0%
One victim	89.0	92.2
One offender	52.6	50.0
Multiple offenders	8.2	10.9
Number of offenders unknown	28.2	31.3
Multiple victims	10.0	10.0
One offender	6.2	4.6
Multiple offenders	1.6	2.2
Number of offenders unknown	2.2	3.2
All nonlethal violence, 1992-97	100.0%	100.0%
One victim	88.9	84.5
One offender	64.3	67.1
Multiple offenders	20.1	14.8
Number of offenders unknown	4.5	2.6
Multiple victims	11.1	15.5
One offender	7.1	9.6
Multiple offenders	3.3	5.5
Number of offenders unknown	0.7	0.5*

*Estimate is based on 10 or fewer cases.

Almost 9 in 10 murders and nonlethal victimizations with an elderly victim involved only one victim.

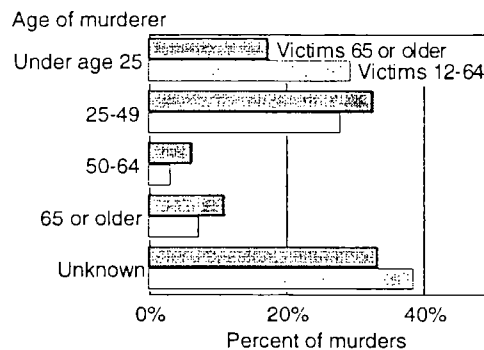
Among offenses with elderly victims, 10% of murders and 23% of nonlethal violent victimizations were known to involve more than one offender.

Males committed 60% of the murders of both elderly and younger victims

Whites committed a larger proportion of the murders of persons age 65 or older than of persons ages 12-64, 1992-97

Characteristics of murderers	Percent of murder victims	
	Age 65 or older	Age 12-64
Gender		
Male	59.5%	60.8%
Female	9.8	5.3
Unknown	30.7	33.9
Race		
White	40.2%	28.4%
Black	27.2	35.3
Other	1.1	1.5
Unknown	31.5	34.7

Of murders of persons age 65 or older —
persons age 65 or older committed 11%
persons between ages 25 and 49 committed 33%
persons younger than 25 committed 17%



Males committed over three-fourths of the nonlethal violence against persons age 65 or older; white offenders committed almost half, 1992-97

	Percent of victims	
	65 or older	Ages 12-64
Gender of offender(s)		
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Male	76.3	80.2
Female	13.2	14.4
Both genders	4.2	3.0
Unknown	6.3	2.4
Race of offender(s)		
Total	100.0%	100.0
White	48.5	57.8
Black	31.8	26.2
Other, mixed, or unknown race(s)	19.7	16.0

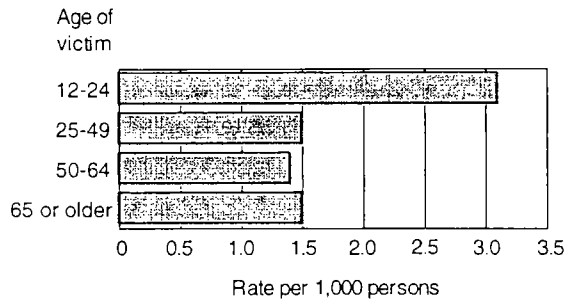
Almost half the nonlethal violence against persons age 65 or older involved a white offender and a white victim; almost a fifth, a black offender and a white victim; and about an eighth, a black offender and a black victim

	Victims of violence	
	Age 65 or older	Ages 12-64
Total, all victims and offenders	100.0%	100.0%
White victim(s) total	82.4%	82.3%
White offender	47.8	54.7
Black offender	19.3	14.5
Other race offender	5.6	7.4
Offenders of more than 1 race	2.5*	2.3
Offender of unknown race	7.3	3.3
Black victim(s) total	15.2%	14.6%
White offender	0.4*	1.7
Black offender	12.0	11.2
Other race offender	0.7*	0.9
Offenders of more than 1 race	0.5*	0.4
Offender of unknown race	1.6*	0.5
Other race victim(s) total	2.4%*	3.1

*Based on 10 or fewer unweighted cases.

Purse snatching and pocket picking (personal theft), 1992-97

The average annual rate of personal thefts (1½ thefts per 1,000 elderly persons) was similar to the rates for persons ages 25-49 and ages 60-64 but was half the rate of personal theft per 1,000 persons ages 12-24



Most personal theft from elderly persons took place in stores or other businesses and occurred during the day

	Percent of victims	
	65 or older	Ages 12-64
Place of occurrence	100.0%	100.0%
Own home or friend's home	3.8*	6.9
Commercial place	40.6	30.7
Parking lot or garage	6.1*	5.9
Open area or street	22.5	22.4
Public transportation	16.9	10.9
Other	10.1	23.2
Time of occurrence	100.0%	100.0%
Day	87.0	63.7
Night	12.3	34.3
Unknown	0.7*	1.9*
How often did victim go shopping	100.0%	100.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Almost every day or more	35.4	26.0
At least once a week	54.9	55.6
At least once a month	8.9	13.2
Less often	0.8*	1.6*
Never or unknown	0*	3.6*

*Estimate is based on 10 or fewer cases.

— Among victims of purse snatching and pocket picking, persons age 65 or older (87%) were more likely than others (64%) to be victimized during the day.

— 90% of elderly victims of personal theft reported going shopping at least once a week or more.

Property crimes, 1992-97

Persons age 65 or older reported that most car thefts occurred at night but that other thefts occurred about equally at night and during the day

Most thefts from the elderly took place in or near their homes

	Percent of households	
	Age 65* or older	Ages 12- 64*
Household burglary	100.0%	100.0%
Day	29.3	36.3
Night	29.5	31.6
Unknown	41.1	32.1
Motor vehicle theft	100.0%	100.0%
Day	22.0	23.4
Night	63.6	64.6
Unknown	14.5	11.9
Theft	100.0%	100.0%
Day	35.8	39.2
Night	33.4	38.3
Unknown	30.8	22.5
Place of occurrence		
Motor vehicle theft		
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Near victim's home	54.5	44.2
Near friend's or neighbor's home	7.3	8.2
Parking lot or garage	26.1	32.9
Open area, near public transportation	7.5	10.0
Other	4.6	4.6
Theft		
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Victim's, friend's, neighbor's home	59.0	48.1
Commercial place, parking lot	21.7	23.4
School	3.8	13.9
Open area, public transportation	5.3	6.3
Other	10.2	8.2

Note: Household burglaries occurred at home, except in a few victimizations involving victims' vacation dwellings.

*Age is determined by the age of the head of the household, the person responding to the interviewer.

— Household heads in all age groups often did not know the time of day when property crimes occurred.

— Among elderly households, burglary and theft were about equally likely to occur in the day or at night.

— For all age groups, motor vehicle theft occurred more often at night.

— More than half of motor vehicle thefts from elderly households occurred near their homes, compared with less than half for other age groups.

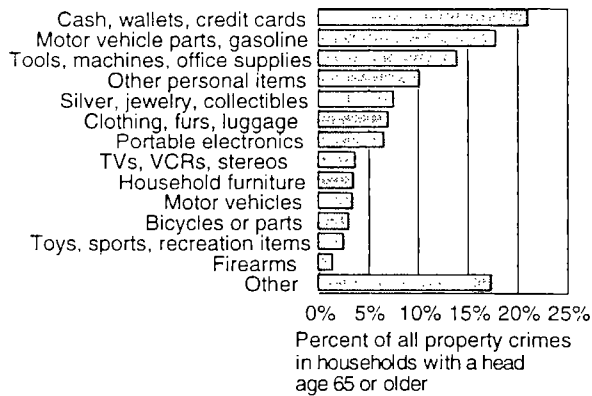
— Motor vehicle thefts from elderly households were less likely than those from other age groups to occur in parking lots or garages.

— About 3 in 5 thefts from elderly households occurred near their or a friend's or neighbor's home. (Theft from a car is categorized as a household theft.)

Elderly and younger victims did not differ in how burglars entered their residences, and usually entry was not forced

	Percent of households	
	Age 65 or older	Ages 12-64
Forced entry	45.6%	48.7%
If not by forced entry, how did burglar enter the residence?	100.0%	100.0%
Was let in	4.8	4.5
Pushed way in	0.4	1.1
Through open door	21.9	20.8
Through unlocked door or window	36.2	35.7
Through locked door or window (used key, picked lock, other methods)	14.4	15.4
Other, unknown	22.3	22.5

Cash, credit cards, motor vehicle parts, and gasoline were the items most often stolen from households with a household head age 65 or older, 1992-97



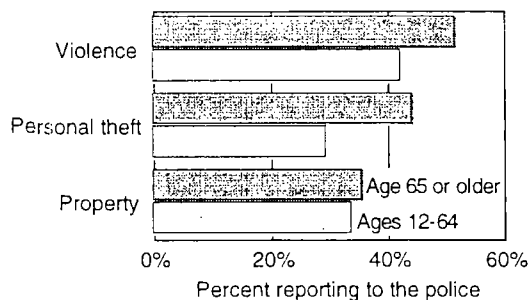
Loss from completed property crimes



For completed burglary, motor vehicle theft, and property theft, about a third of elderly households had losses of \$500 or more, compared to less than half the households with a younger head of household.

Reporting crime to the police

Victims age 65 or older were more likely than younger victims to report nonlethal violence and personal theft to the police



According to victims age 65 or older, about half the violent crimes they experienced were reported to the police, 1992-97

	Percent of crimes reported to the police	
	Age 65 or older	Ages 12-64
Nonlethal violent crime^a	51.6%	42.2%
Rape/sexual assault	29.8*	30.4
Robbery	69.2	55.4
Assault total	46.2	41.0
Aggravated assault	50.3	54.4
Simple assault	44.7	36.4
Personal theft	44.2%	29.4%
Property crime total	35.5%	33.7%
Household burglary	50.3	50.2
Motor vehicle theft	78.3	77.2
Theft	27.1	26.8

*The estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

^aMurder was nearly always reported to or discovered by police.

— Victims age 65 or older were more likely than other victims to report robbery and simple assault to the police.

— There were no differences between the elderly and those ages 12-64 in the extent to which they reported property crimes to the police.

National Crime Victimization Survey methodology

The National Crime Victimization Survey measures personal and household offenses, including crimes not reported to police. The crimes are rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, personal theft (purse snatching and pocket picking), household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft from a house or car. Information is obtained by interviewing all occupants age 12 or older of housing units selected to comprise a representative sample.

The sample also includes persons living in group quarters, such as dormitories, rooming houses, and religious group dwellings. Excluded are crew members of merchant vessels, Armed Forces personnel living in military barracks or temporary housing, and institutionalized persons, such as correctional facility inmates and hospital or nursing home patients.

A Census Bureau representative interviews each housing unit at 6-month intervals, spreading out the complete sample of the household interviews over the entire year. Every 6 months between 1992 and 1997, the Census Bureau interviewed about 85,000 persons in about 44,000 housing units about the crimes they had experienced in the previous 6 months. Yearly response rates ranged from 89% to 96% of eligible households and individuals.

Since sample survey data provide the estimates in this report, these estimates are subject to sampling variation. Comparisons presented in this report are statistically significant at

the 95% confidence level, meaning that the estimated difference is greater than twice the standard error. Statements of comparison qualified by language such as "slightly," "somewhat," or "marginal" indicated statistical significance at the 90% level (1.6 standard error).

Some crimes of concern are not within the scope of the NCVS. Abuse of the elderly occurring in institutional settings is not covered in NCVS, which is a household based survey. The NCVS does not measure fraud; therefore, fraud targeted at the elderly, such as telemarketing scams, are not included.

Also, crimes that are measured by NCVS are based on information that victims provide in telephone or personal interviews. Elder abuse is probably underreported, because some victims may be unable to report, afraid to discuss the abuse, or may not regard mistreatment by relatives or caretakers as a crime.

If relatives or caretakers were taking personal or household property from the victim without the victims' knowledge, these crimes also would not be included.

NCVS data are useful for providing a comprehensive overview of the entire elderly population in the United States. Within this population, however, there are people with particular vulnerabilities whose victimization may be underreported or outside the scope of the crimes measured by this survey.

Other types of studies targeted at specific groups, such as elderly people in nursing houses, elderly victims of fraud, and other similar studies are needed to complement data available through the NCVS.

Calculation of rates and annual levels

The rates of crime in this report are annual average rates for the period 1992 through 1997. The numerator of a given number is the sum of crimes that occurred for each year from 1992 through 1997; the denominator is the sum of the annual population of persons or households for these year (or the number falling within the particular demographic group being measured). These numbers are multiplied by 1000 to obtain the average annual rates. Average annual levels of criminal victimization are obtained by summing the number of victimizations each year between 1992 and 1997 and dividing by six.

The population totals used in this report are calculated from estimates derived from the victimization survey. Included in the population are persons age 12 or older living in households, including group quarters such as dormitories. The estimates do not include children under 12, institutionalized persons, U.S. citizens living abroad, crew members of merchant vessels, and Armed Forces personnel

living in military barracks. The percentages are calculated using the method similar to the one used for average annual rates.

The NCVS was redesigned in 1992 to improve survey methods and collect previously unreported information. Data collected prior to 1992 are not comparable to data collected using the redesigned methodology. The estimates for 1973-91 presented in the trend figures on page 8 have been adjusted to make them comparable to data collected under the redesigned methodology. The adjustment methods are described in *Criminal Victimization 1973-95* (NCJ 163069).

Information on murder

Murder data were obtained from the Uniform Crime Reports, prepared by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Supplemental Homicide Reports (SHR) data file for 1992-97 was used to obtain characteristics of murder victims, offenders and incidents. There may be slight differences between these estimates and those found in the yearly FBI publication, *Crime in the United States*. These differences occur, since data files are updated with additional data that may not have been available at the time of publication of the yearly report.

Appendix tables

Appendix table 1. Average annual rates of violent and property victimization, by age of victim or household head, 1992-97

Type of crime	Average annual, 1992-97	Average annual rates per 1,000 persons or households		
		All	65 or older	Less than age 65
All crimes	40,581,530			
Crimes of violence	10,511,850	48.9	5.3	56.4
Murder	20,580	0.1	0.0	0.1
Nonfatal violence	10,491,270	48.8	5.3	56.3
Rape/Sexual assault	441,070	2.1	0.1	2.4
Robbery	1,209,260	5.6	1.3	6.4
Total assault	8,840,940	41.2	3.9	47.5
Aggravated assault	2,284,190	10.6	1.1	12.3
Simple assault	6,556,760	30.5	2.8	35.3
Personal theft	402,120	1.9	1.5	1.9
Property crimes	29,667,550	292.2	117.3	338.3
Household burglary	5,326,780	52.5	29.5	58.5
Motor vehicle theft	1,664,550	16.4	5.9	19.2
Theft	22,676,220	223.4	81.9	260.6
Number of households		101,518,080	21,161,850	80,356,230
Population, age 12 or older		214,789,200	31,296,350	183,492,860
Number of crimes		40,581,530	2,694,290	37,887,250

Note: "Household head" means only that this person provided information about household characteristics and data on burglaries, motor vehicle thefts, or property thefts occurring within the household

**Appendix 2. Rates per 1,000 persons or households,
by type of crime and age of victim, 1992-97**

Type of crime and age of victim	Rates per 1,000 persons or households					
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total violence*	52.4	55.1	54.3	47.5	43.9	41.0
Age 12-24	112.4	115.8	117.7	102.1	91.3	88.8
Age 25-49	50.5	53.5	52.1	45.6	43.3	38.5
Age 50-64	14.5	18.4	16.3	15.2	16.1	16.5
Age 65 or older	5.3	6.0	5.3	6.0	4.8	4.5
Personal theft**	1.8	2.4	2.3	1.7	1.6	1.5
Age 12-24	3.3	4.1	3.3	2.5	3.1	2.4
Age 25-49	1.1	2.1	2.0	1.6	1.2	1.2
Age 50-64	1.6	1.2	1.7	1.6	1.0	1.4
Age 65 or older	1.6	2.2	2.1	1.0	1.0	1.0
Property crime	329.4	326.7	311.2	282.6	266.2	240.8
Age 12-24	492.5	539.3	527.6	513.5	436.6	409.0
Age 25-49	409.1	394.2	378.4	342.0	326.0	295.8
Age 50-64	273.9	279.0	254.5	225.3	222.0	196.4
Age 65 or older	126.7	133.4	126.4	116.7	105.7	95.7
Household burglary	59.3	60.7	55.1	48.0	48.2	44.2
Age 12-24	88.6	123.0	109.0	94.8	86.6	96.0
Age 25-49	67.5	66.6	61.2	54.2	54.3	49.8
Age 50-64	52.6	51.8	44.2	39.3	43.4	35.8
Age 65 or older	35.1	34.4	33.1	26.3	25.6	22.8
Motor vehicle theft	18.6	19.7	17.6	16.2	13.3	13.3
Age 12-24	29.9	30.7	28.6	31.1	18.0	23.7
Age 25-49	22.4	24.2	21.9	19.4	16.7	16.0
Age 50-64	17.0	18.5	14.0	14.8	11.1	10.5
Age 65 or older	6.6	5.7	6.5	5.0	5.2	6.5
Theft	251.6	246.3	238.5	218.4	204.8	183.2
Age 12-24	374.0	385.6	390.0	387.5	332.0	289.2
Age 25-49	319.2	303.4	295.3	268.4	255.1	230.1
Age 50-64	204.4	208.7	196.3	171.2	167.4	150.0
Age 65 or older	85.0	93.3	86.8	85.4	74.9	66.4

*Violence includes murder, rape and sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault

**Personal theft includes purse snatching and pocket picking.

Appendix table 3. Demographic characteristics of victims of nonlethal violence, by age of victim, 1992-97

Characteristic of victim of violence	Average annual rates of nonlethal violence per 1,000 persons					
	All	65 or older	Total	Less than age 65		
				12-24	25-49	50-64
Nonfatal violence	48.8	5.3	56.3	104.4	47.1	16.1
Race						
White	47.6	4.8	55.5	105.7	46.5	16.4
Black	59.5	9.8	65.0	107.8	53.7	15.9
Other	41.9	7.1*	44.7	70.5	39.8	10.1
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	54.3	10.6	57.5	95.1	40.9	18.7
Non-Hispanic	48.1	5.0	56.0	105.6	47.6	16.0
Gender						
Male	57.8	7.1	65.0	122.3	52.2	20.0
Female	40.5	4.0	47.7	86.2	42.1	12.6
Marital status						
Never married	90.6	7.5	92.3	106.9	67.1	25.3
Married	23.9	4.4	27.5	64.0	30.8	12.1
Widowed	9.4	4.4	25.0	165.6	42.0	17.0
Divorced/separated	76.2	14.4	82.8	238.1	93.9	32.3
Household income						
Less than \$15,000	67.3	6.1	88.8	125.7	81.8	24.1
\$15,000 to \$24,999	51.7	4.1	63.6	109.2	55.2	16.7
\$25,000 to \$34,999	48.6	4.4	54.7	100.4	48.3	11.7
\$35,000 to \$49,999	46.2	6.9	49.5	97.6	41.3	15.1
\$50,000 or more	41.0	5.8	43.0	93.9	33.5	16.6

*The estimate is based on about 10 or fewer sample cases.

Appendix table 4. Demographic characteristics for victims of property crime, by age of household head, 1992-97

Characteristic of household head	Average annual rates of property crime per 1,000 households, by age of household head					
	All	65 or older	Total	12-24	25-49	50-64
Property crime	292.2	117.3	338.3	486.9	357.0	240.6
Race						
White	285.6	110.2	335.4	493.6	355.9	235.3
Black	336.6	184.2	363.3	478.8	375.1	273.4
Other	301.9	161.1	316.5	394.9	316.1	275.4
Gender						
Male	294.2	125.8	329.9	501.4	345.9	245.3
Female	289.1	107.9	353.6	471.7	378.1	231.3
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	382.6	168.2	408.5	478.5	414.1	338.7
Non-Hispanic	285.0	114.7	332.0	488.3	351.5	234.7
Marital status						
Never married	342.7	90.6	357.3	508.1	312.5	174.2
Married	291.7	124.4	326.6	419.4	354.8	245.9
Widowed	139.5	102.1	259.5	327.6	381.1	214.8
Divorced/separated	349.5	166.1	372.1	558.1	411.2	259.4
Household income						
Less than \$15,000	287.1	103.0	388.2	508.3	404.3	227.1
\$15,000 to \$24,999	287.4	116.6	347.4	490.4	364.8	228.6
\$25,000 to \$34,999	303.4	147.1	333.0	452.3	357.6	223.2
\$35,000 to \$49,999	313.0	145.7	332.7	453.2	351.3	262.5
\$50,000 or more	329.9	178.6	341.5	433.5	363.0	286.3

Appendix table 5. Characteristics of murder, by age of victim, 1992-97

	Percent of murder victims						
	All	65 or older	Less than age 65				
			Total	Under 12 ^a	12-24	25-49	50-64
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Gender							
Male	77.4%	56.1%	79.7%	54.7%	85.0%	76.9%	75.0%
Female	22.4	43.9	20.2	45.1	15.0	23.1	25.0
Race							
White	47.1%	68.0%	45.8%	53.9%	38.8%	48.0%	62.7%
Black	49.6	29.9	51.1	41.5	58.3	48.8	33.3
Other	2.5	1.7	2.5	3.6	2.4	2.5	3.1
Weapon^b							
Firearm	68.6%	36.1%	73.0%	17.0%	83.3%	68.7%	55.7%
Knife	13.2	22.3	13.2	4.3	8.8	15.4	18.3
Blunt object	4.5	13.4	3.9	6.1	1.8	4.6	9.1
Other	8.9	19.2	5.9	59.3	3.2	7.0	10.6
Unknown	4.8	9.1	3.9	13.3	2.8	4.4	6.2

Note: Does not include missing data.

^aData for victims under age 12 available for murder only.

^bType of weapon used by offender against victim.

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, Supplemental Homicide Reports.

Appendix table 6. Nonlethal violence characteristics, by age of victim, 1992-97

	All	65 or older	Percent of victims			
			Total	12-24	25-49	50-64
Weapon was used	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Yes	26.8	32.9	26.7	26.3	27.0	26.7
No	65.2	51.0	65.5	67.1	64.2	61.4
Unknown	8.0	16.1	7.9	6.6	8.7	11.9
Type of weapon*						
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Firearm	38.5	41.9	38.5	36.9	40.0	39.3
Knife	24.8	17.1	24.9	26.6	23.7	20.8
Other	32.9	36.7	32.8	32.6	32.9	33.3
Unknown type	3.8	4.4*	3.8	3.8	3.5	6.6
Self protection	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Resisted	71.4	49.4	71.7	71.1	72.7	68.6
Did not resist or unknown	28.6	50.6	28.3	28.9	27.3	31.4
Injury	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Injured	25.4	22.1	25.5	28.3	23.5	17.5
Not injured	74.6	77.9	74.5	71.7	76.5	82.5
Type of injury	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Serious	13.2	12.9	13.2	11.5	14.6	21.5
Minor	81.8	85.2	81.8	83.9	79.5	77.0
Rape or sexual assault without other injury	4.5	1.9*	4.5	4.3	5.1	1.1*
Severity unknown	0.5	0*	0.5	0.3	0.8	.4*
Outcomes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Not injured	74.6	77.9	74.5	71.7	76.5	82.5
Injured	25.4	22.1	25.5	28.3	23.5	17.5
Injured, not treated	14.4	10.9	14.5	17.4	12.1	8.6
Treated at scene	4.5	2.9	4.5	4.6	4.5	3.5
Treated at doctor's office	1.5	2.1*	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.2
Treated at hospital	4.7	5.6	4.6	4.3	5.0	4.0
Treated elsewhere	0.4	0.6*	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.1*

*Estimate based on 10 or fewer cases.

*Percentages for weapon type are based on victimizations that involved weapon use by the offender.

Appendix table 7. Relationship of victim and offender for murder and nonlethal violence, by age of victim, 1992-97

	All	65 or older	Percent of victims			
			Total	Less than age 65		
				12-24	25-49	50-64
Murder victims						
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Stranger	13.8	14.6	14.3	14.7	13.8	15.8
Nonstranger total	47.0	50.1	45.8	43.9	46.6	48.5
Relative, intimate	15.7	26.4	13.5	7.3	16.3	22.2
Other known	31.3	23.7	32.3	36.6	30.3	26.4
Unknown relationship	39.1	35.3	39.9	41.4	39.5	35.6
Nonlethal violence victims						
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All related or well known	30.2	21.9	30.3	29.0	32.2	26.2
Relatives	9.3	8.7	9.3	5.5	13.2	10.9
Boyfriend/girlfriend	5.6	0.4	5.7	6.3	5.6	0.9
Well known	15.3	12.9	15.3	17.3	13.4	14.3
Causal acquaintance	17.9	14.5	18.0	22.4	13.8	13.0
Stranger	48.5	56.2	48.4	45.1	51.0	55.3
Unknown relationship	3.4	7.4	3.3	3.4	3.0	5.5

Note: Murder data are from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports.
Nonlethal violence data are from the National Crime Victimization Survey.

**Appendix table 8. Perceived characteristics of offenders,
by age of nonlethal violence victims, 1992-97**

	All	65 or older	Percent of victims			
			Total	12-24	25-49	50-64
Gender of offenders	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Male	80.1	76.3	80.2	78.6	81.8	79.8
Female	14.3	13.2	14.4	16.0	12.8	12.1
Some offenders of each gender	3.1	4.2	3.0	3.0	2.9	4.1
Unknown gender	2.5	6.3	2.4	2.3	2.4	3.9
Race of offenders	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
White	57.7	48.5	57.8	57.5	58.1	57.9
Black	26.3	31.8	26.2	24.2	28.1	28.8
Other	8.8	7.7	8.8	10.6	7.9	0.6
Mixed or unknown race	7.2	13.0	7.2	7.7	5.9	13.1
Age of offenders						
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Under 21	30.8	18.2	31.0	49.1	13.7	15.9
Age 21 through 29	23.9	19.6	24.0	21.2	27.2	20.9
Age 30 or older	29.5	44.6	29.3	11.9	45.7	46.4
Mixed ages*	10.8	6.7	10.9	13.4	8.4	9.6
Unknown age	5.0	10.9	4.9	4.5	5.0	7.1

*Includes multiple offenders from at least 2 age categories.

Appendix table 9. Time of occurrence of violent and property crimes, by age of victim or household head, 1992-97

	All	65 or older	Percent of victims			
			Total	12-24	25-49	50-64
Nonlethal crimes of violence	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Daytime	51.6	70.3	51.3	52.2	49.1	62.0
Nighttime	47.1	28.6	47.4	46.6	49.6	36.1
Unknown time	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.9
Household burglary	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Daytime	35.5	29.3	36.3	30.8	38.0	34.7
Nighttime	31.3	29.5	31.6	38.5	31.2	28.0
Unknown time	33.1	41.1	32.1	30.7	30.9	37.3
Motor vehicle theft	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Daytime	23.3	22.0	23.4	16.5	25.1	21.7
Nighttime	64.5	63.6	64.6	72.5	63.2	64.9
Unknown time	12.1	14.5	11.9	11.0	11.7	13.4
Property theft	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Daytime	38.9	35.8	39.2	30.0	40.9	38.0
Nighttime	38.0	33.4	38.3	49.4	37.1	36.1
Unknown time	23.1	30.8	22.5	20.5	21.9	25.9

Appendix table 10. Place of occurrence of violent and property crimes, by age of victim or household head, 1992-97

	All	65 or older	Percent of victims			
			Total	Less than age 65 12-24	25-49	50-64
Nonlethal violence	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
In or near victim's home	26.0	43.2	25.7	19.7	31.6	29.9
Open area/public transportation	21.7	21.0	21.7	22.1	21.2	21.8
Commercial place/parking lot	20.6	16.4	20.7	16.8	24.4	24.9
In/near friend's/neighbor's home	9.4	5.9	9.5	12.3	7.1	3.7
Other	22.3	13.4	22.4	29.1	15.7	19.7
Motor vehicle theft	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Near victim's home	45.0	54.5	44.2	38.6	45.0	44.7
Parking lot or garage	32.4	26.1	32.9	35.8	33.0	31.2
Open area/public transportation	9.8	7.5	10.0	9.3	9.5	12.3
Near friend's or neighbor's home	8.2	7.3	8.2	12.6	8.0	6.5
Other	4.6	4.6	4.6	3.7	4.6	5.4
Property theft	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Victim's, friend's, neighbor's home	49.0	59.0	48.1	50.3	47.7	48.7
Commercial place, parking lot	23.3	21.7	23.4	28.4	22.6	23.7
School	13.1	3.8	13.9	8.4	15.5	11.1
Open area, public transportation	6.2	5.3	6.3	7.1	6.1	6.6
Other	8.4	10.2	8.2	5.8	8.2	9.9

Note: Household burglaries occurred at home, except in a few victimizations involving the victims' vacation dwellings.

**Appendix table 11. Reporting of crimes to the police,
by age of victim or household head, 1992-97**

	All	65 or older	Percent of victims reporting			
			Total	Less than age 65		
				12-24	25-49	50-64
Percent reporting crimes to police:						
Nonlethal violent crime*	42.3%	51.6%	42.2%	34.8%	49.5%	46.6%
Rape/Sexual assault	30.4	29.8	30.4	33.8	26.3	29.2
Robbery	55.9	69.2	55.4	46.2	63.0	64.8
Assault total	41.1	46.2	41.0	33.4	48.8	44.0
Aggravated assault	54.3	50.3	54.4	47.1	61.9	56.2
Simple assault	36.5	44.7	36.4	28.5	44.2	39.7
Personal theft	31.1%	44.2%	29.4%	16.2%	37.3%	44.2%
Property crime	33.8%	35.5%	33.7%	32.8%	33.3%	35.5%
Household burglary	50.2	50.3	50.2	41.7	51.7	51.1
Motor vehicle theft	77.3	78.3	77.2	73.3	77.2	79.6
Theft	26.8	27.1	26.8	27.3	26.3	28.3

*Murder was almost always reported to or discovered by the police.

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Crimes against Persons Age 65 or Older, 1992-97

- Trends
- Gender, race, and income
- Victim-offender relationship
- Crimes of violence
- Property crimes
- Reporting to police

**U.S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Justice Statistics**

Jan M. Chaiken, Ph.D.
Director

This Bureau of Justice Statistics report was written by Patsy A. Klaus. Cathy Maston verified the data. Tom Hester produced the report, with graphic assistance from the BJS editorial team of Yvonne Boston, Tina Dorsey, Ida Hines, and Rhonda Keith. Jayne Robinson prepared the report for printing.

**The International Year
of Older Persons**

The General Assembly of the United Nations observed the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons "In recognition of humanity's demographic coming of age and the promise it holds for maturing attitudes and capabilities in social, economic, cultural and spiritual undertakings...." (Resolution 47/5)

The year's theme was "Towards a Society for All Ages." "A society for all ages is one that does not caricature older persons as patients and pensioners. Instead, it sees them as both agents and beneficiaries of development." — Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, October 1, 1998

The Bureau of Justice Statistics presents this comprehensive report about criminal victimization of persons age 65 or older in the context of a society with appropriate concerns for all age groups.

Jan M. Chaiken, Ph.D.
Director

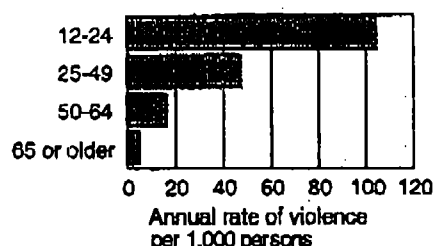
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Highlights

The elderly, persons age 65 or older, experienced less violence and fewer property crimes than younger persons

On average, 1992-97, for every 1,000 persons at their age level, persons age 65 or older experienced about 5 violent crimes and those younger than age 25 experienced over 100



Between 1992 and 1997 the average population of persons age 65 or older was 31.3 million. These elderly were victims of 2.7 million property and violent crimes, either completed or attempted —

- 2.5 million property crimes (household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and household theft)
- 46,000 purse snatchings or pocket pickings
- 166,000 nonlethal violent crimes (rape, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault)
- 1,000 murders

(These annual averages describe data aggregated across the 6 years, providing a large enough number of cases for more detailed analyses. See page 27 for further explanation.)

When compared with other age groups, the elderly were disproportionately affected by property crimes. More than 9 in 10 crimes against the elderly were property crimes, compared to fewer than 4 in 10 crimes against persons age 12 to 24.

The elderly made up 15% of the population age 12 or older, but accounted for 7% of measured crimes.

Robbery accounted for a quarter of the violent crimes against persons age 65 or older, but less than an eighth of the violent crimes experienced by those age 12-64.

In general, compared with crime incidents involving other age groups, most crimes against the elderly were more likely to occur in or near their homes, and to occur in daylight hours.

Differences in lifestyle may account in part for when and where crimes against the elderly occurred. For example, victims of nonlethal violence who said that they never went out at night for entertainment, work, shopping or other similar activities included —

- 22% of victims age 65 or older
- About 3% of victims in age groups under 50.

Elderly victims of nonlethal violence were less likely than younger victims to go out at night.

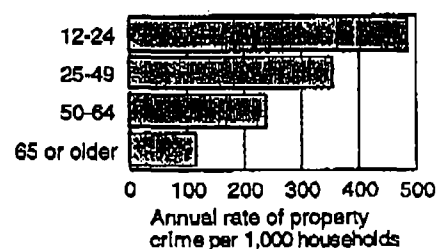
Compared with violent crime victims in other age groups, elderly victims of nonlethal violence were less likely to use self-protective measures, such as arguing with the offender, running away, calling for help, or attacking the offender.

Age of victim	Percent of victims of nonlethal violence resisting the offender
All ages	71%
12-24	71
25-49	73
50-64	69
65 or older	49

More than 1 in 5 elderly victims of nonlethal violence sustained injuries.

For some crimes, such as overall violence, the elderly were more likely to report crimes to police than victims in other age groups. In all age groups, however, many crimes were not reported.

On average from 1992 to 1997, the rate of property crime for persons age 65 or older was less than a fourth that of the young (117 crimes per 1,000 elderly households and 480 crimes per 1,000 households of the young)



2 Crimes against Persons Age 65 or Older, 1992-97