

CRIME &

**DELINQUENCY
IN CALIFORNIA**

1997



ARRESTS

PART 1



WHAT IS AN ARREST?

Arrests occur when persons are taken into custody because they are believed to have violated the law. Not all arrests result in persons being placed in jail. Arrestees may be released by the arresting agency, may post bail or may be released on their own recognizance to appear in court at a later date. Some are issued citations, much like traffic tickets, which direct them to appear in court.

Arrests are divided into two major groups: felony arrests and misdemeanor arrests. An arrest for a felony-level offense can result in a sentence to state prison if the offender is convicted as an adult. An arrest for a misdemeanor-level offense can result in a sentence of up to one year in a county jail, a fine, probation or any combination of the three.

Juveniles may also be arrested for truancy, incorrigibility, running away, and curfew violations. These are commonly referred to as status offenses because agency intervention is based solely on the juvenile's status as a minor. Status offenses are acts that would not be "crimes" if committed by adults.

HOW ARE ARRESTS REPORTED?

Unlike crimes, which are classified by nationwide Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) standards, arrests are reported by California statute definition of the offense. This may cause some differences in the definitions of certain crimes and the reporting of the arrests for those crimes. For instance, theft from a locked automobile is a burglary by California Penal Code definition. The crime would be classified and reported as a theft under the UCR definition. The arrest offenses in the following section are defined by California statute for which specific code sections are listed in the Appendix.

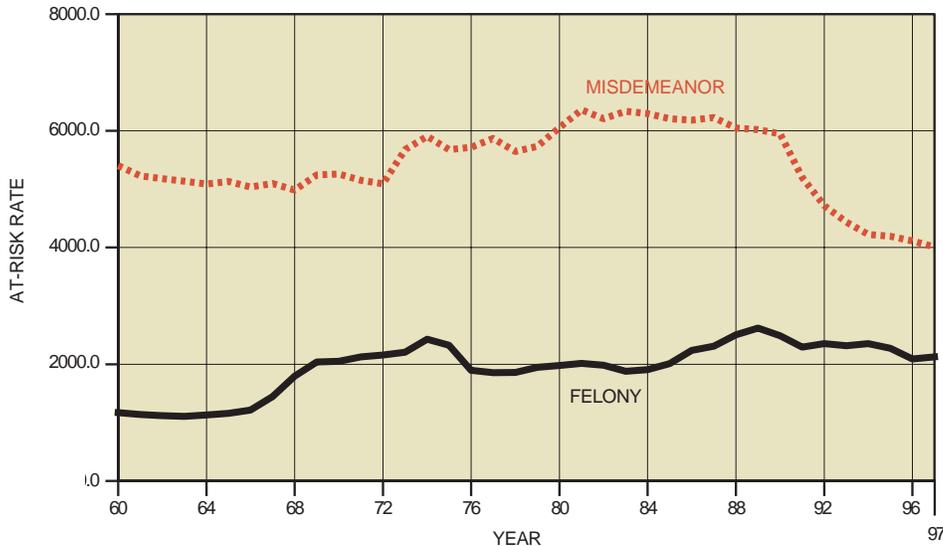
All California law enforcement agencies report arrest and citation information to the Department of Justice on the "Monthly Arrest and Citation Register," which lists each arrestee; includes information on age, gender, and race/ethnic group; and specifies the "most serious" arrest offense and law enforcement disposition.

WHAT IS AN ARREST RATE?

An arrest rate describes the number of arrests made by law enforcement agencies per 100,000 total population or per 100,000 population considered to be at risk for arrest. The following section includes three at-risk comparison populations: total (10-69 years of age), adult (18-69 years of age), and juvenile (10-17 years of age). The formula used to calculate at-risk rates can be found in the [Appendix](#).

ARREST TRENDS, 1960-1997

FELONY AND MISDEMEANOR ARRESTS, 1960-1997
Rate per 100,000 Population at Risk



Source: [Table 16](#).

Note: These 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

The above chart displays arrest rates beginning with 1960, the first year complete data were available. Felony and misdemeanor arrest rates are based on populations at risk.

Comparing 1960 to 1997:

- There was an 81.7 percent increase in the rate of felony arrests (from 1,170.0 to 2,125.6).
- There was a 25.8 percent decrease in the rate of misdemeanor arrests (from 5,404.0 to 4,010.8).

Felony arrests as a proportion of total arrests increased from 15.4 percent in 1960 to 33.8 percent in 1997.

The 1997 misdemeanor arrest rate of 4,010.8 per 100,000 population at risk is the lowest for the years shown. Misdemeanor arrests as a proportion of total arrests decreased from 71.4 percent in 1960 to 63.8 percent in 1997.



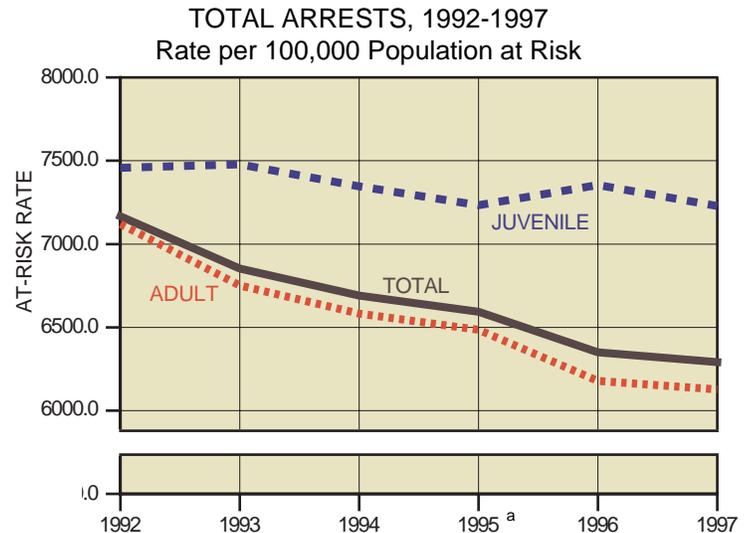
Total Arrests

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

- There was a 12.2 percent decrease in the rate of total arrests.
- There was a 14.0 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and a 3.1 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

- There was a .9 percent rate decrease in total arrests.
- There was a .8 percent rate decrease in adult arrests and a 1.7 percent rate decrease in juvenile arrests.



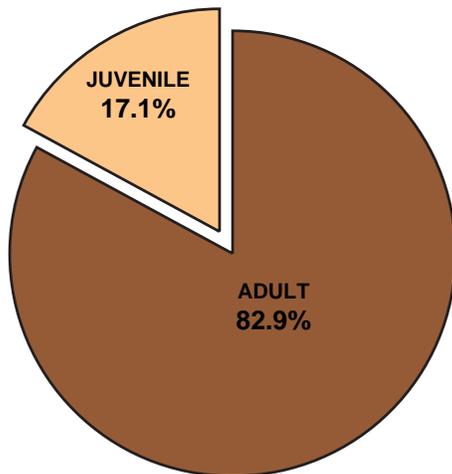
Source: Table 17.

^a These 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

From 1996 to 1997, the arrest rate decreased .9 percent. This was the eighth consecutive year of decline (see Tables 16 and 17).

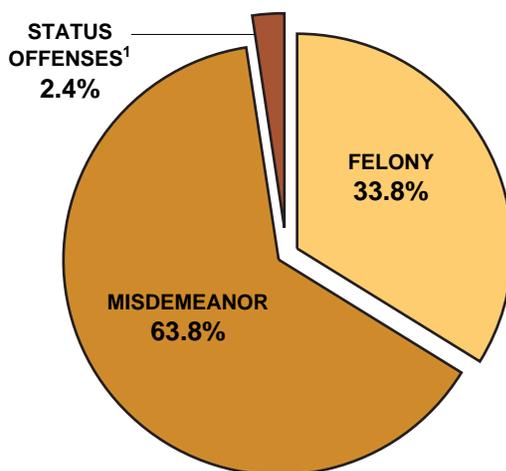
Total Arrests (continued)

TOTAL ARRESTS, 1997
By Adult and Juvenile



Source: Table 18.

TOTAL ARRESTS, 1997
By Level of Offense



Source: Table 18.

¹ Status offenses include truancy, incorrigibility, running away, and curfew violations.

In 1997,

Of 1,620,381 arrests reported:

- Adult arrests accounted for 82.9 percent (1,343,861).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 17.1 percent (276,520).

And,

- Felony arrests accounted for 33.8 percent (547,550).
- Misdemeanor arrests accounted for 63.8 percent (1,033,196).
- Status offense arrests accounted for 2.4 percent (39,635).



Total Arrests (continued)

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

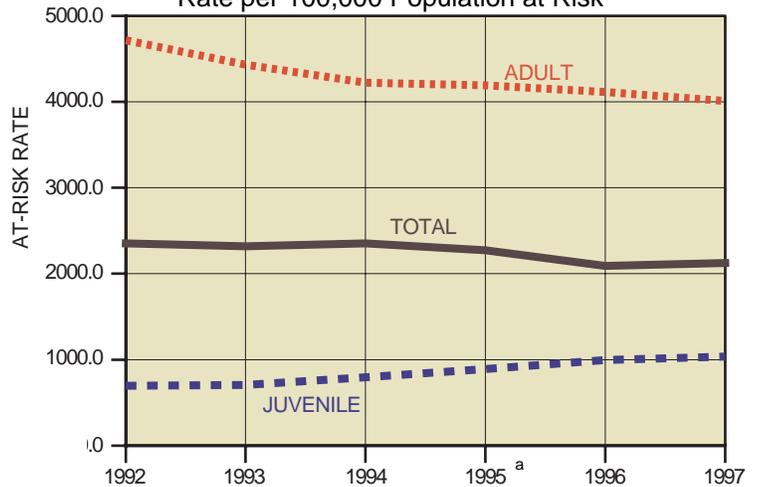
- There was a 9.7 percent decrease in the rate of felony arrests.
- There was a 15.0 percent decrease in the rate of misdemeanor arrests.
- There was a 48.7 percent increase in the rate of status offense arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

- There was a 1.7 percent rate increase in felony arrests.
- There was a 2.5 percent rate decrease in misdemeanor arrests.
- There was a 4.2 percent rate increase in arrests for status offenses.

From 1996 to 1997, the misdemeanor arrest rate decreased 2.5 percent. This was the tenth consecutive year of decline (see Tables 16 and 17).

TOTAL ARRESTS, 1992-1997
By Level of Offense
Rate per 100,000 Population at Risk

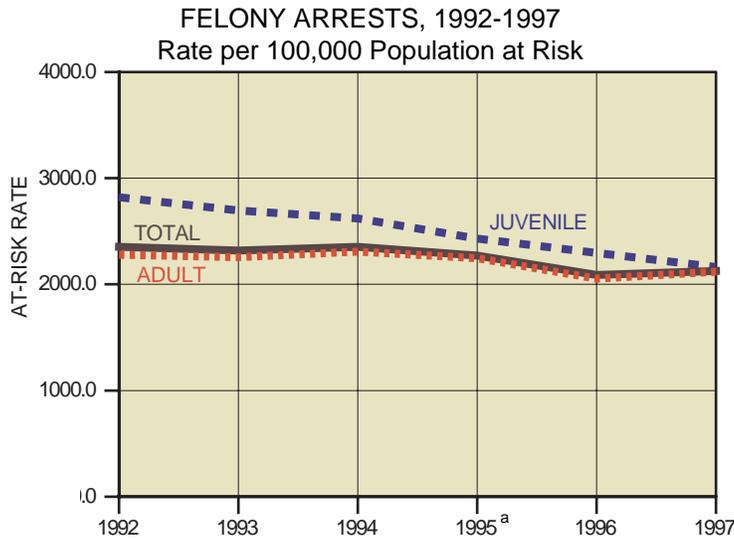


Source: Table 17.

¹ Status offenses include truancy, incorrigibility, running away, and curfew violations.

^a These 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

Felony Arrests



Source: [Table 17](#).

^aThese 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

- There was a 9.7 percent decrease in the rate of total felony arrests.
- There was a 7.0 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and a 23.3 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

- There was a 1.7 percent rate increase in total felony arrests.
- There was a 3.2 percent rate increase in adult arrests and a 5.8 percent rate decrease in juvenile arrests.

In 1997, the felony arrest rate for juveniles decreased 5.8 percent. This was the sixth consecutive year of decline.



Felony Arrests (continued)

In 1997,

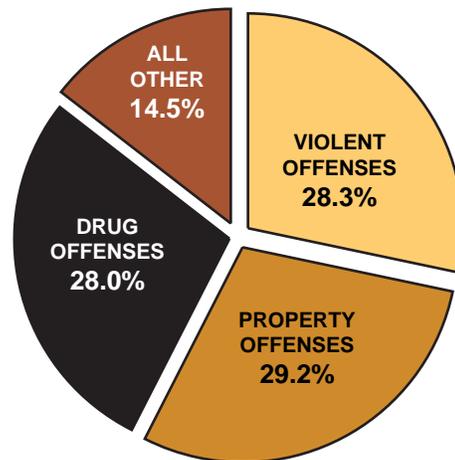
Of 547,550 felony arrests reported:

- Violent offenses accounted for 28.3 percent (155,018).
- Property offenses accounted for 29.2 percent (159,980).
- Drug offenses accounted for 28.0 percent (153,099).
- All other offenses accounted for 14.5 percent (79,453).

And,

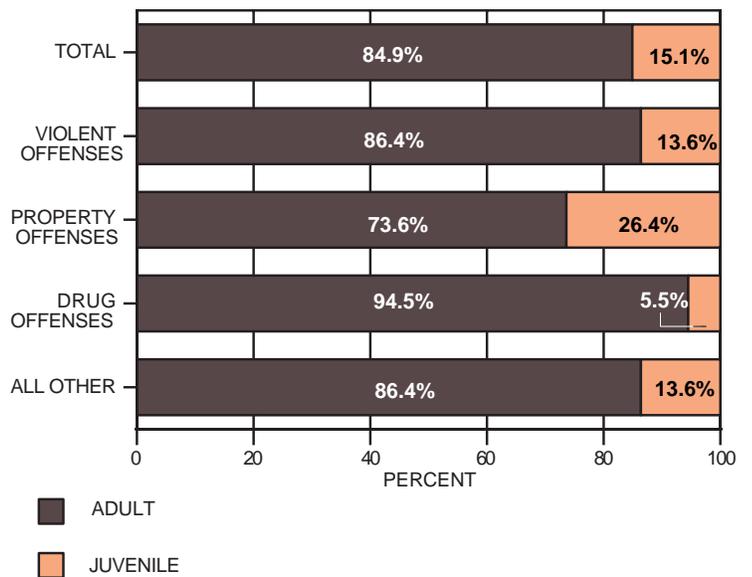
- Adult arrests accounted for 84.9 percent (464,802).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 15.1 percent (82,748).

FELONY ARRESTS, 1997
By Category



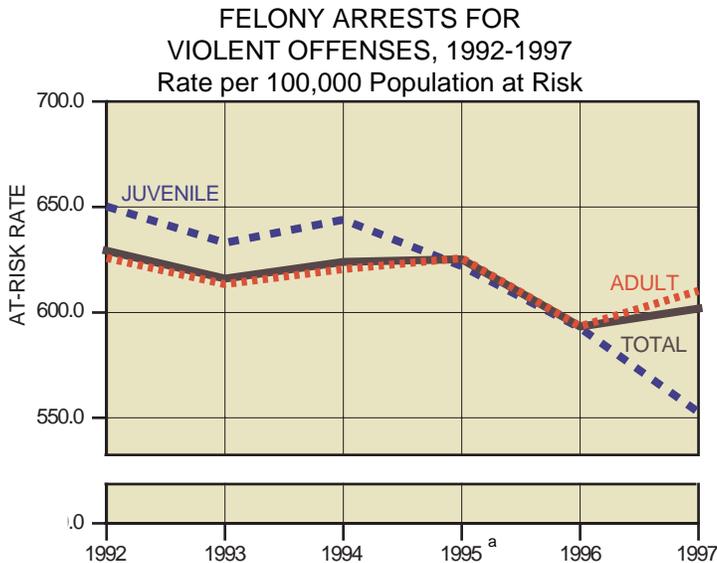
Source: Table 19.

FELONY ARRESTS, 1997
Category by Adult and Juvenile Arrests



Source: Table 21.

Arrests for Violent Offenses



Source: [Table 22.](#)

^aThese 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

Violent Offense Arrests - felony arrests for homicide, forcible rape, robbery, assault, and kidnapping.

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

- There was a 4.4 percent decrease in the rate of total arrests for violent offenses.
- There was a 2.5 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and a 15.0 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

- There was a 1.4 percent rate increase in total arrests for violent offenses.
- There was a 2.8 percent rate increase in adult arrests and a 6.7 percent rate decrease in juvenile arrests.

Since 1992, the rate of juvenile arrests for violent offenses has decreased 15.0 percent.



Arrests for Violent Offenses (continued)

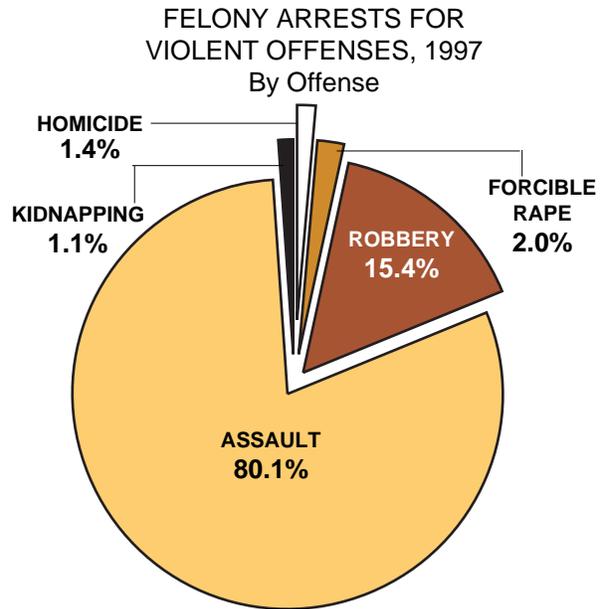
In 1997,

Of 155,018 felony arrests for violent offenses:

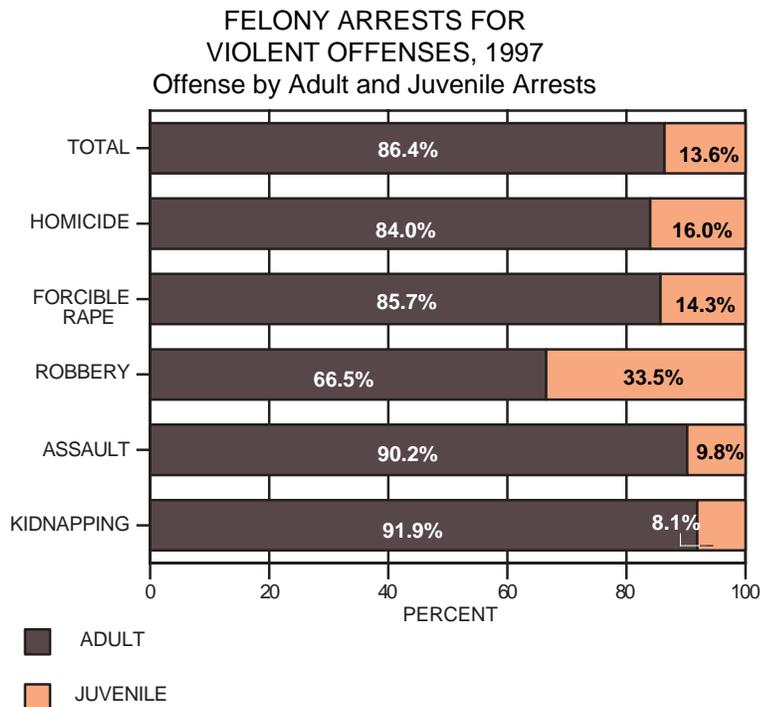
- Homicide accounted for 1.4 percent (2,212).
- Forcible rape accounted for 2.0 percent (3,108).
- Robbery accounted for 15.4 percent (23,824).
- Assault accounted for 80.1 percent (124,135).
- Kidnapping accounted for 1.1 percent (1,739).

And,

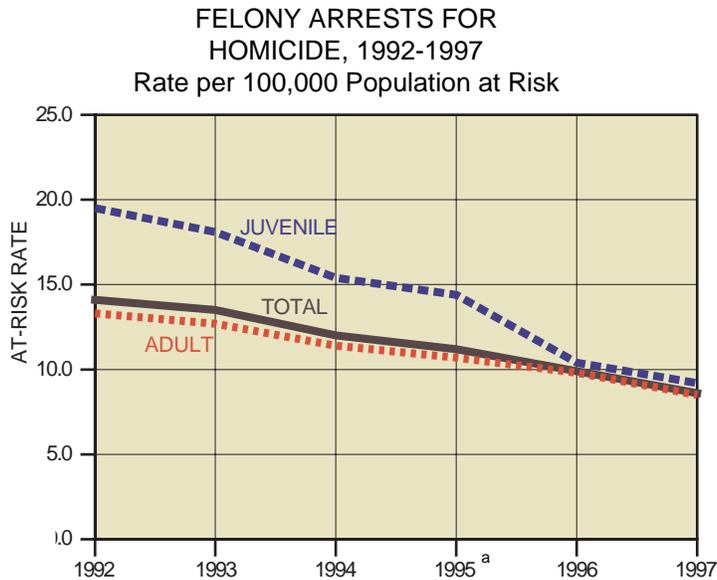
- Adult arrests accounted for 86.4 percent (133,875).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 13.6 percent (21,143).



Source: [Table 20.](#)



Source: [Table 21.](#)



Source: Table 22.

^aThese 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

Homicide Arrests

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

- There was a 39.0 percent decrease in the rate of total homicide arrests.
- There was a 36.1 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and a 52.8 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

- There was a 13.1 percent decrease in the rate of total homicide arrests.
- There was a 13.3 percent rate decrease in adult arrests and an 11.5 percent rate decrease in juvenile arrests.

In 1997,

Of 2,212 arrests for homicide:

- Adult arrests accounted for 84.0 percent (1,859).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 16.0 percent (353).

The rate of juvenile arrests for homicide offenses has decreased 52.8 percent since 1992.



Forcible Rape Arrests

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

- There was a 28.0 percent decrease in the rate of total forcible rape arrests.
- There was a 28.0 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and a 32.2 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

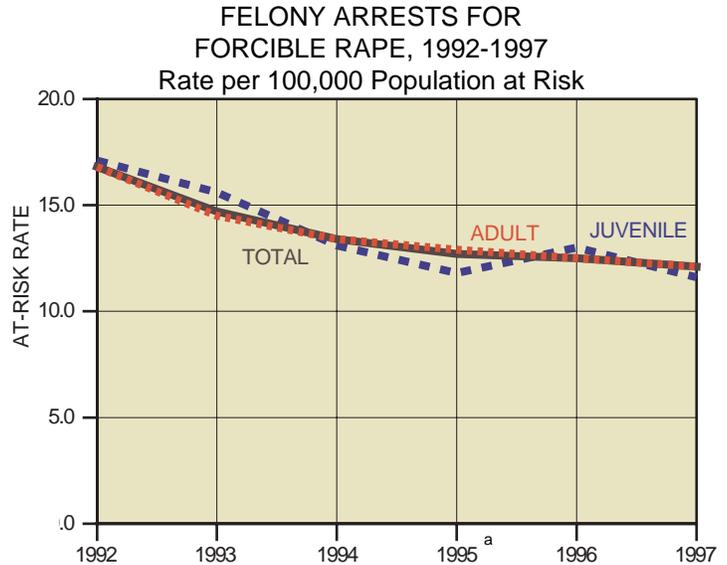
- There was a 3.2 percent rate decrease in total forcible rape arrests.
- There was a 3.2 percent rate decrease in adult arrests and a 10.8 percent rate decrease in juvenile arrests.

In 1997,

Of 3,108 arrests for forcible rape:

- Adult arrests accounted for 85.7 percent (2,663).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 14.3 percent (445).

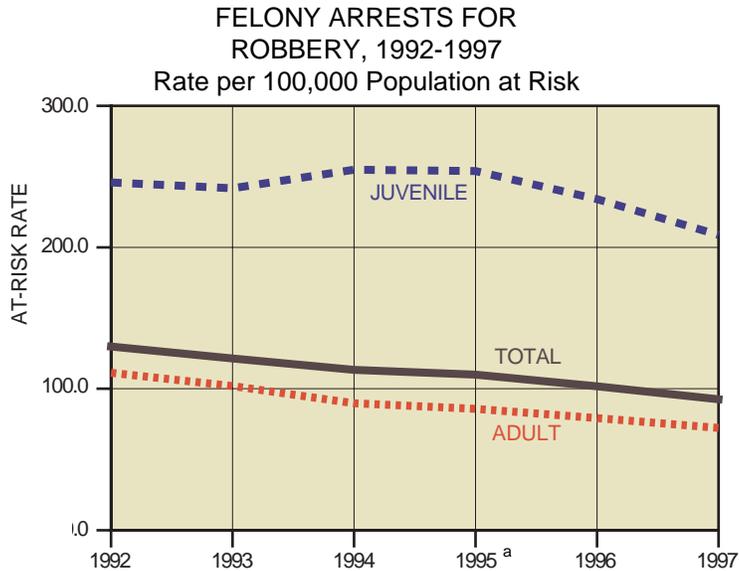
The rate of arrests for forcible rape has decreased 28.0 percent from 1992.



Source: [Table 22](#).

^aThese 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

Robbery Arrests



Source: [Table 22](#).

^aThese 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

- There was a 28.8 percent decrease in the rate of total robbery arrests.
- There was a 35.1 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and a 15.1 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

- There was a 9.1 percent rate decrease in total robbery arrests.
- There was an 8.8 percent rate decrease in adult arrests and a 10.9 percent rate decrease in juvenile arrests.

In 1997,

Of 23,824 arrests for robbery:

- Adult arrests accounted for 66.5 percent (15,840).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 33.5 percent (7,984).

From 1992 to 1997, the robbery arrest rate decreased 28.8 percent in rate.



Assault Arrests

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

- There was a 5.4 percent increase in the rate of total assault arrests.
- There was a 7.9 percent increase in the rate of adult arrests and an 11.8 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

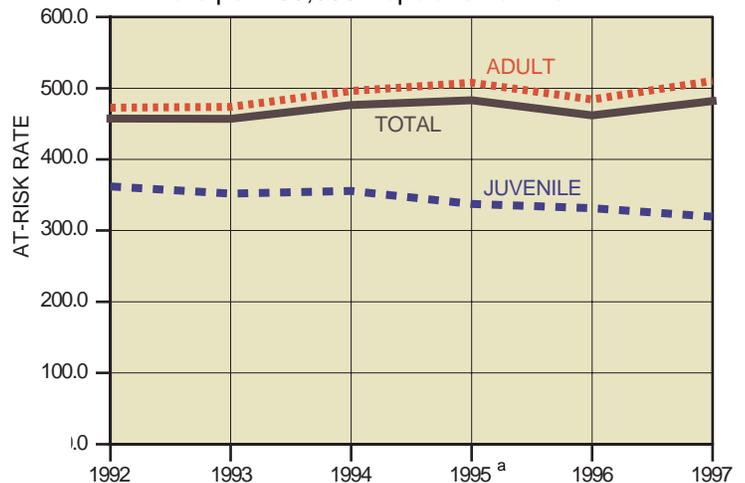
- There was a 4.3 percent rate increase in total assault arrests.
- There was a 5.4 percent rate increase in adult arrests and a 3.7 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

In 1997,

Of 124,135 arrests for assault:

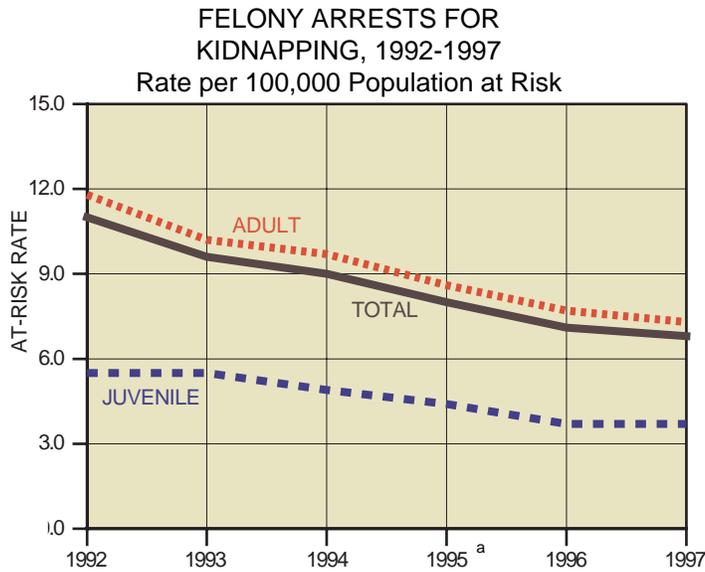
- Adult arrests accounted for 90.2 percent (111,915).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 9.8 percent (12,220).

FELONY ARRESTS FOR
ASSAULT, 1992-1997
Rate per 100,000 Population at Risk



Source: Table 22.

^aThese 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.



Source: [Table 22.](#)

^aThese 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

Kidnapping Arrests

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

- There was a 38.2 percent decrease in the rate of total kidnapping arrests.
- There was a 38.1 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and a 32.7 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

- There was a 4.2 percent decrease in the rate of total kidnapping arrests.
- There was a 5.2 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and no change in the rate of juvenile arrests.

In 1997,

Of 1,739 arrests for kidnapping:

- Adult arrests accounted for 91.9 percent (1,598).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 8.1 percent (141).



Arrests for Property Offenses

Property Offense Arrests - *felony arrests for burglary; theft; motor vehicle theft; forgery, checks, and access card offenses; and arson.*

Comparing 1992 to 1997:

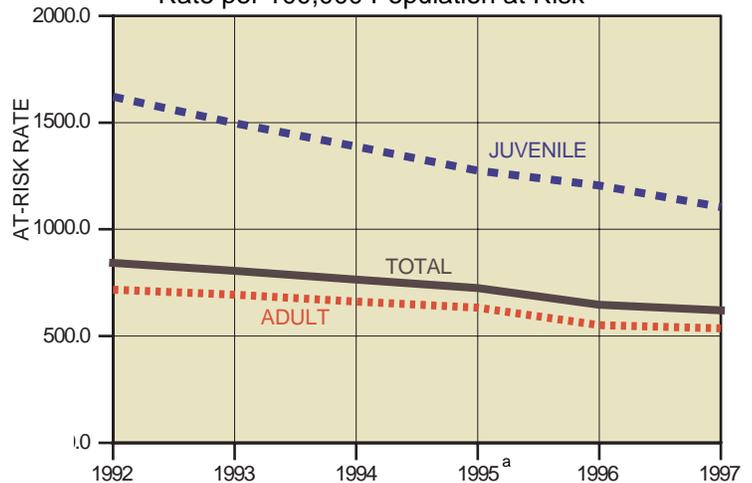
- There was a 26.3 percent decrease in the rate of total arrests for property offenses.
- There was a 25.2 percent decrease in the rate of adult arrests and a 31.9 percent decrease in the rate of juvenile arrests.

From 1996 to 1997:

- There was a 3.9 percent rate decrease in total arrests for property offenses.
- There was a 2.6 percent rate decrease in adult arrests and an 8.3 percent rate decrease in juvenile arrests.

The 1997 property offense arrest rate of 621.0 per 100,000 population at risk is the lowest for the years shown.

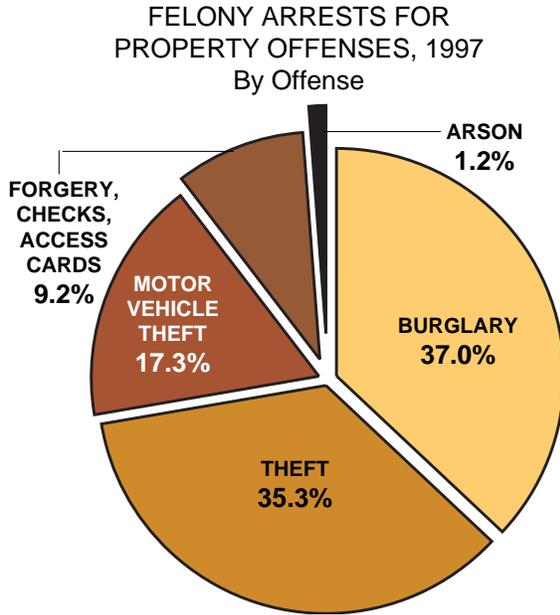
FELONY ARRESTS FOR
PROPERTY OFFENSES, 1992-1997
Rate per 100,000 Population at Risk



Source: Table 22.

^aThese 1995 data include estimates. See "Data Characteristics and Known Limitations" in the Appendix.

Arrests for Property Offenses (continued)



Source: Table 20.

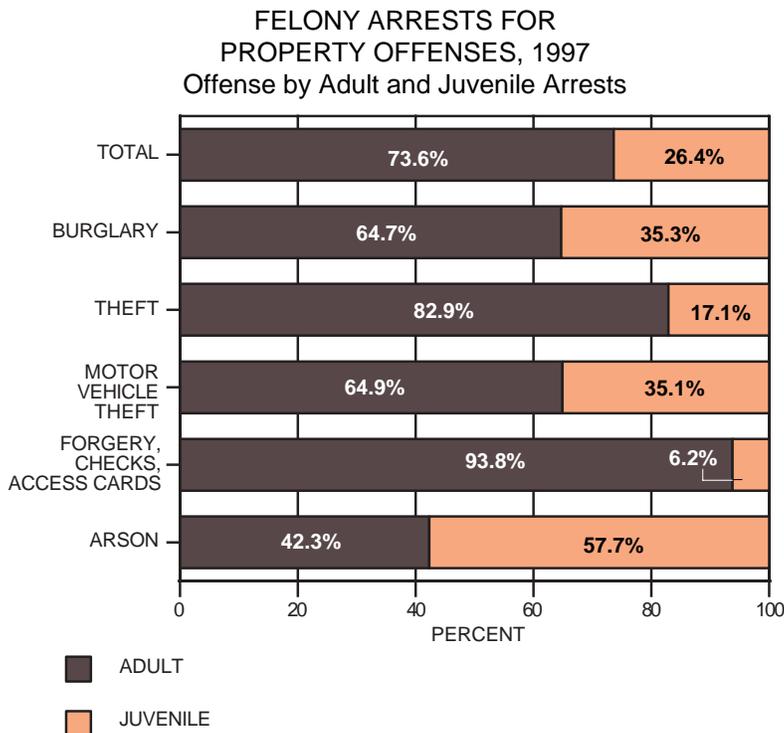
In 1997,

Of 159,980 felony arrests for property offenses:

- Burglary accounted for 37.0 percent (59,148).
- Theft accounted for 35.3 percent (56,468).
- Motor vehicle theft accounted for 17.3 percent (27,745).
- Forgery, checks, and access cards accounted for 9.2 percent (14,769).
- Arson accounted for 1.2 percent (1,850).

And,

- Adult arrests accounted for 73.6 percent (117,693).
- Juvenile arrests accounted for 26.4 percent (42,287).



Source: Table 21.

[Continue on to the Arrests](#)

[Section Part 2](#)

[Back to Crimes Part 2](#)

[C&D Table of Contents](#)

[CJSC Home Page](#)

[Attorney General's Home Page](#)