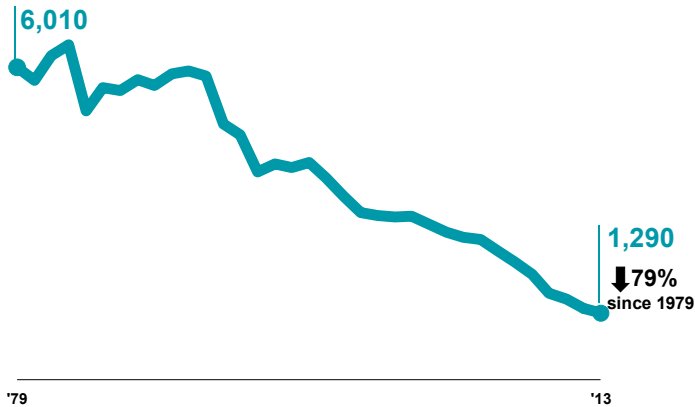




## Overview

Young car drivers aged between 17 and 24 are an important set of road users because they are statistically over-represented in reported road accidents in comparison with older car drivers aged 25 and above. The high levels of risk associated with young drivers are likely to be as a result of inexperience, and the age of the young car driver.

### Killed or seriously injured, 1979-2013



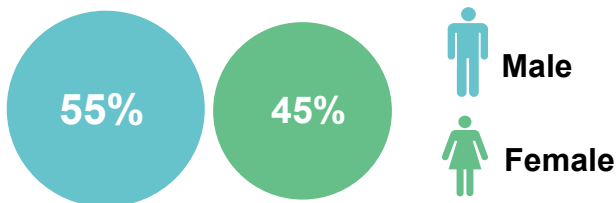
### Young driver accident related costs

**£2.9 billion**

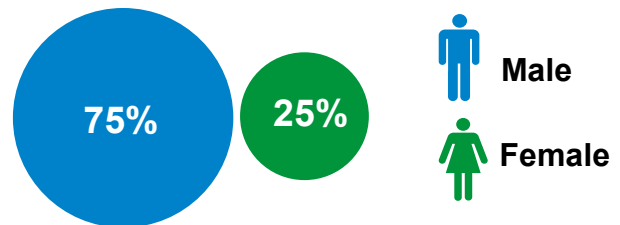
The value of prevention of young car driver accidents is estimated to have been **£2.9 billion** which compares with **£14.7 billion** for all accidents.

## Gender comparisons

Young car driver distance travelled by gender

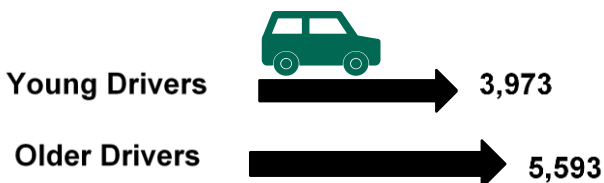


Young car driver fatalities by gender



### How far do they drive?

On average young car drivers drive fewer miles than drivers aged 25 and over but drive more at night time

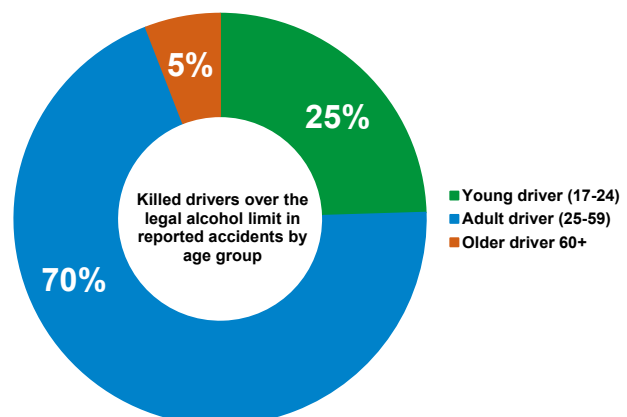


Proportion of miles driven at night



### Young drink drivers

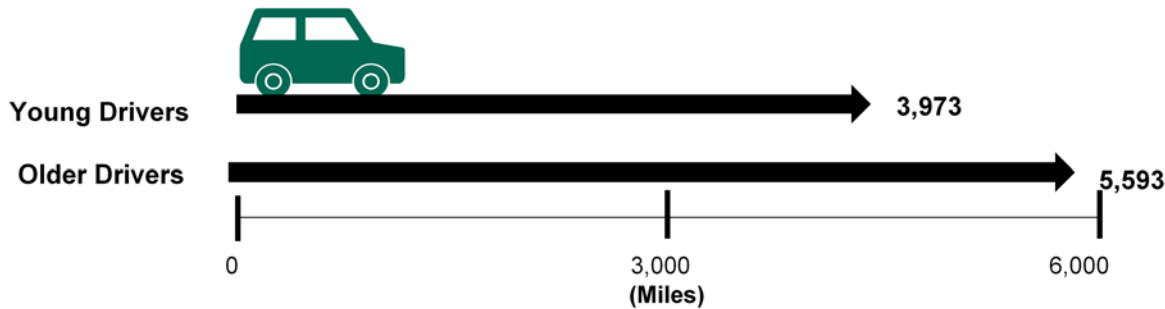
Young car drivers account for a quarter of drivers killed in reported accidents who are over the legal alcohol limit.



## How many young car drivers are on the roads?

- Young people aged between 17 and 24, account for around 7 per cent of all full car driving licence holders in Great Britain.
- DVLA licence figures for 2013 show that a total of 2.8 million young people aged 17-24 years in Great Britain hold a full car driving licence, this is around 44 per cent of 17-24 year olds. The driving licence rate is lower than the rate for the whole population as younger people are less likely to drive. An additional 2.1 million young car drivers hold a provisional licence.

## How far do they drive?



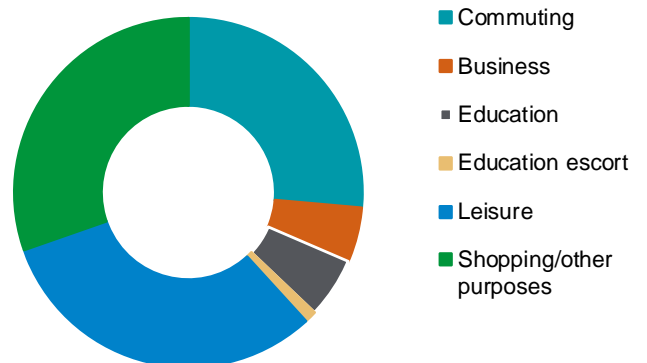
- On average young car drivers drive **fewer miles** than drivers aged 25 and over. A typical young car driver covers around 4,000 miles a year in comparison with an average of 5,600 miles per year covered by older driver. We estimate that young car drivers drive around 5 per cent of all vehicle miles in Great Britain.
- The National Travel Survey (NTS) estimates that young male car drivers tend to travel further than young female car drivers. In 2013 young male car drivers travelled an average of 4,482 miles whereas young female car drivers travelled an average of 3,453 miles.

## Reasons for travelling

- According to the NTS, around **half** of 17-24 year olds with a full driving licence **commute to work** by car. Around **10 per cent** of licence holders drive a car to get to their place of **education**.

- The average distance a young driver drives to **work** is 8.5 miles. The average distance driven to a place of **education** is around 10 miles.
- In low population urban and rural areas, a higher proportion of young drivers drive to a place of work compared with young drivers in large urban and metropolitan areas.

Proportion of 17-24 year old licence holders who drive for each purpose



National Travel Survey: 2002-2012 average data.  
Based on trips made during survey week.

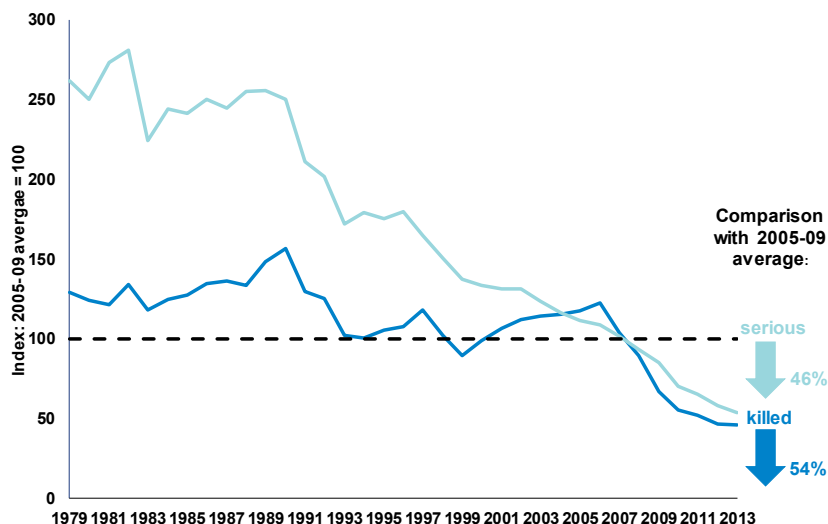
- A fifth of 17-24 year olds are employed, hold a full driving licence **and** drive a car to work. A further 14 per cent are employed and hold a full driving licence but **do not** drive to work.
- Two per cent of 17-24 year olds are students, hold a full driving licence **and** drive a car to a place of education. A further 6 per cent are students and hold a full driving licence but **do not** drive to their place of education.



## Road safety figures

- Road traffic accidents account for around **15 per cent of all deaths for young adults** aged between 15 and 25 and over **a fifth of all deaths amongst people aged between 15 and 19**.
- The number of young car drivers (aged 17-24) involved in **reported road accidents** has fallen significantly since the 1990s, from a high of nearly 90,000 in 1990 to 30,000 in 2013. Young car drivers made up 18 per cent of all car drivers involved in reported road accidents in 2013. However, this is considerably higher than the 5 per cent of miles they account for.

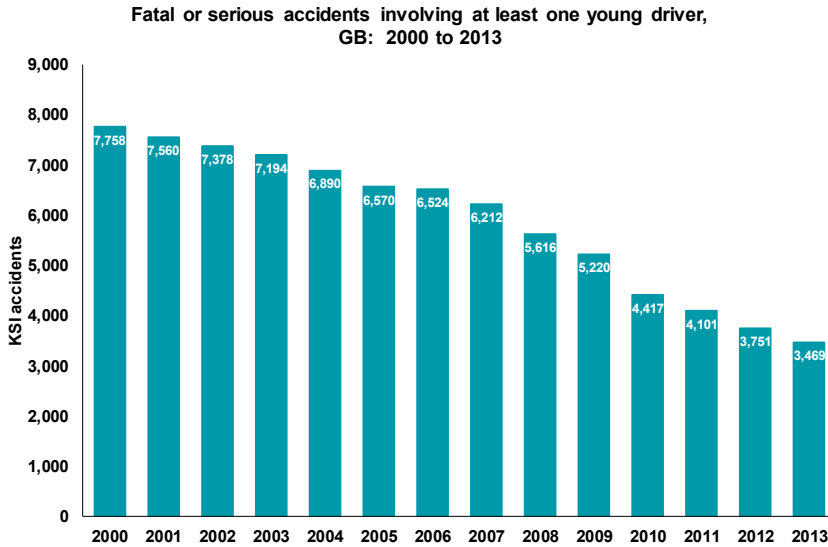
## Young car driver (aged 17-24) fatalities and serious injuries, GB: 1979 to 2013



- **Young car driver fatalities** have had a greater decrease in recent years than **seriously injured casualties**.
- The highest annual figure for young car driver deaths was 448 in 1990. The lowest annual figure was 131 in 2013, a fall of around 70 per cent between the two years.

- The number of young car drivers **seriously injured** has fallen. The highest annual figure was 6,054 serious injuries in 1982 and the lowest recorded figure was 1,159 in 2013, a fall of around 80 per cent.

## Fatal or serious accidents involving at least one young car driver (aged 17-24), GB: 2000 to 2013

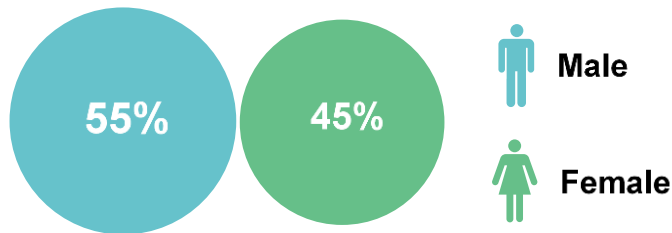


- The number of **fatal or serious accidents** involving at least one young car driver has fallen year on year since 2000.
- In 2013, there were 3,469 fatal or serious accidents involving at least one young car driver. This figure is 55 per cent lower than the 7,758 in 2000.

### Who is involved?

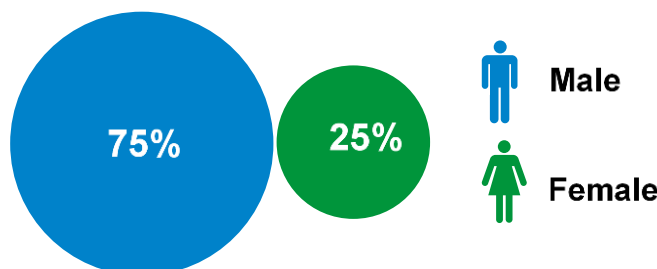
- On average **young male car drivers** travel slightly further than **young female drivers**. In 2013, males accounted for 55 per cent and females accounted for 45 per cent of the **distance travelled** by young car drivers.

#### Average young car driver (aged 17-24) distance travelled by gender



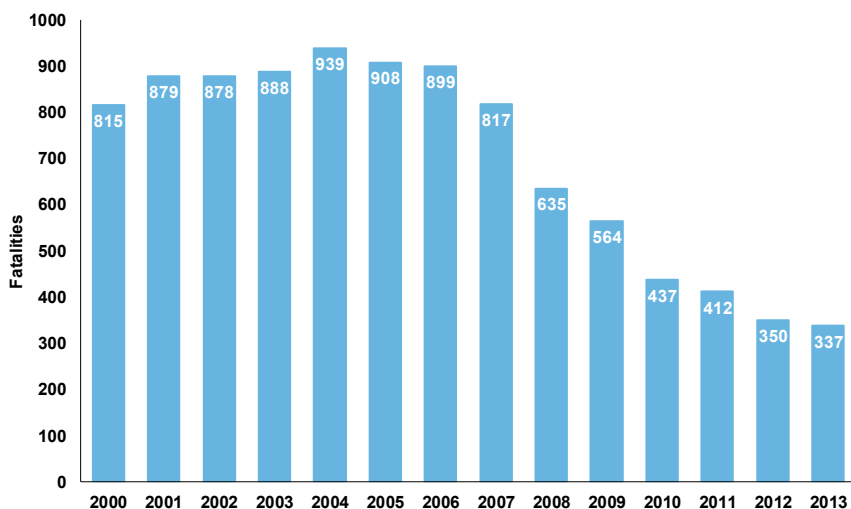
- Males make up a considerably **higher proportion** of young car driver fatalities and KSI casualties. Around three quarters of all young car driver deaths are male. However, the split for slightly injured casualties is even. This suggests that young female drivers are just as likely to be involved in an accident as young male drivers, but young male drivers are more likely to be seriously injured or killed, possibly as a result of being in a higher speed collision.

#### Young car driver (aged 17-24) fatalities by gender



## Fatalities in accidents involving at least one young car driver (aged 17-24), GB: 2000 to 2013

Fatalities in accidents involving at least one young car driver, GB: 2000 to 2013

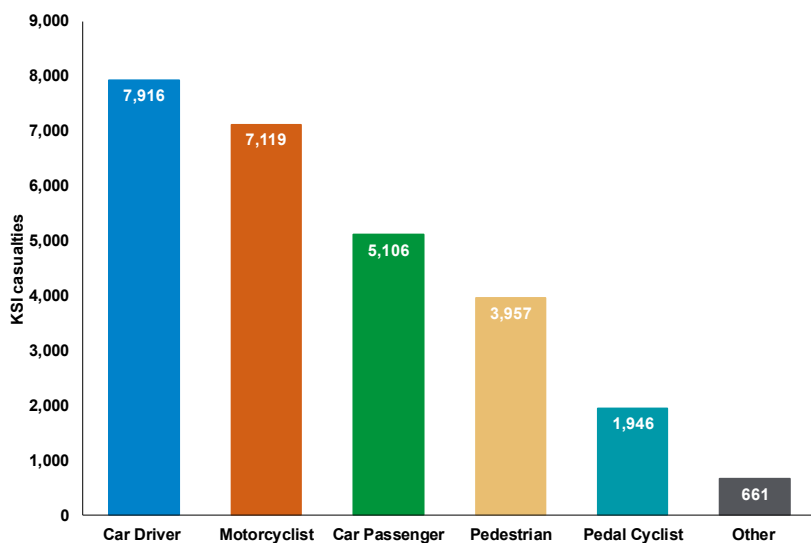


- In 2013, there were 337 fatalities in accidents involving at least one young car driver, roughly a **fifth** of all reported road fatalities.
- Young car drivers **themselves** accounted for 39 per cent of these fatalities and the **passengers** in their cars a further 18 per cent.

- However, the majority of the fatalities were **other road users** (e.g. pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motorcyclists, or people in other vehicles).

## How do young car drivers compare with other road users of the same age?

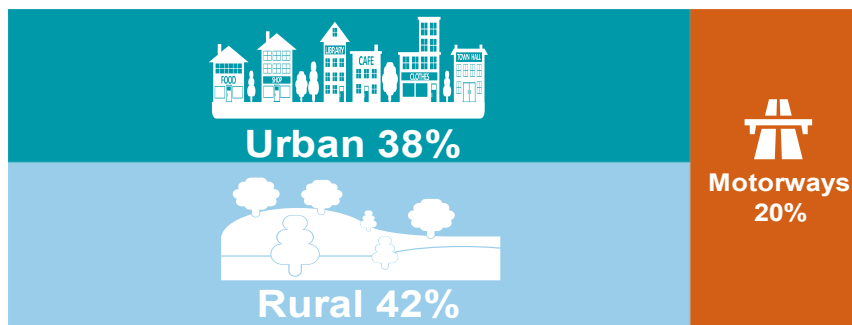
### Killed or seriously injured 17 to 24 year olds by road user type, GB: 2009 to 2013



- In the last five years, young car drivers accounted for 30 per cent of 17 to 24 year old KSIs and **motorcyclists** accounted for 27 per cent. **Car passengers** accounted roughly a fifth of KSIs with **pedestrians** and **pedal cyclists** accounting for just over a fifth of KSIs.

## Type of road

### Reported car traffic (for drivers of all ages) by road type, GB: 2013

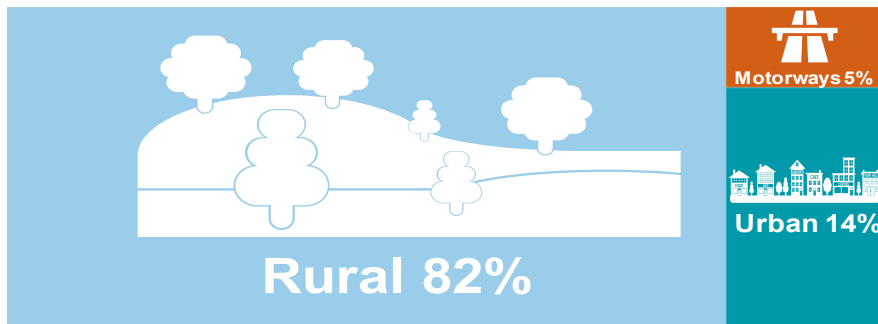


- In 2013, **rural roads** carried the majority of **car traffic** (42 per cent) followed by **urban roads** (38 per cent) and **motorways** (20 per cent).

- Accidents that occur on rural roads are more likely to be of a fatal nature in comparison with those on urban roads. This is because of the difference in the **average speed on different roads**.
- Rural roads have a much higher average speed than urban roads. Rural roads are often also much more sinuous and narrow in nature, with blind bends, dips and other distractions. Accidents at lower speeds on urban roads are less likely to result in serious injuries (or no injuries at all). Despite having a higher average speed of 70mph, motorways contribute to a small proportion of young driver fatalities and casualties of all severities. Motorways have a higher level of design standards in comparison with other roads, and with grade separation and barriers between carriageways have a lower risk of head-on or junction collisions.
- Mile for mile the risk of death on rural roads is around 1.7 times that on urban roads.

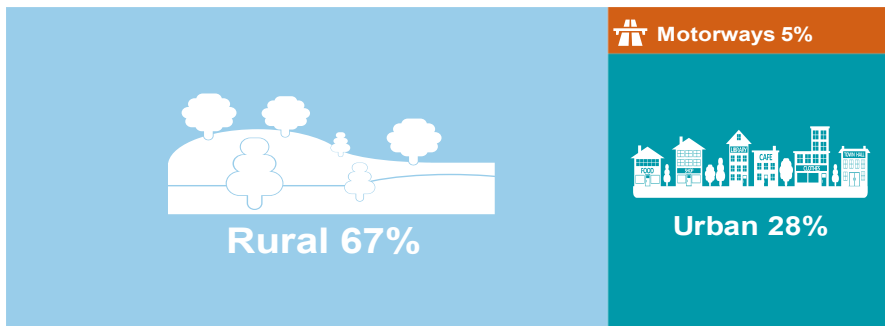
## Young car driver casualties (aged 17-24) by severity and road type, GB: 2013

### Killed (131)



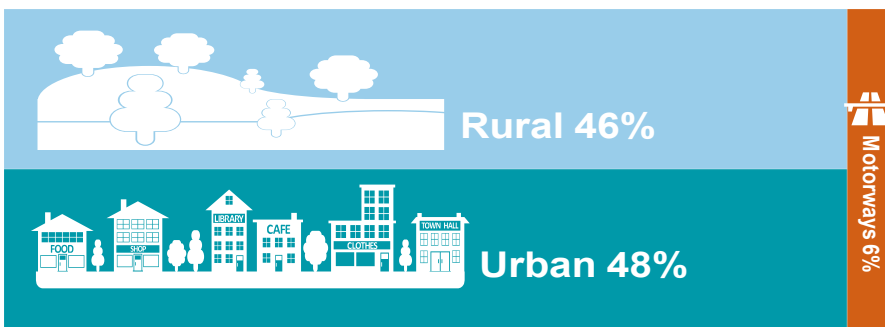
- The majority of **young car driver fatalities** occur on rural roads. In 2013 of the 131 young car driver fatalities, 82 per cent occurred on rural roads, 14 per cent on urban roads and 5 per cent on motorways.

### Serious injuries (1,159)



- Young car drivers are also more likely to be **seriously injured** on rural roads. In 2013 67 per cent of young car drivers were seriously injured on rural roads, 28 per cent on urban roads and 5 per cent on motorways.

### Slight injuries (14,395)



- **Lower severity accidents** are more likely to occur on urban roads. In 2013, 48 per cent of young car driver slight injuries occurred on urban roads, 46 per cent on rural roads and 6 per cent on motorways.

## All casualties (15,685)



- Young car driver **casualties of all severities** are more likely to occur on rural roads. In 2013, 48 per cent of young car driver casualties occurred on rural roads, 46 per cent on urban roads and 6 per cent on motorways.

## When do they drive?

- Across all drivers, the vast majority (97 per cent) of all miles driven are during the **daytime** (5am-9.59pm)
- However for young car drivers (aged 17-24) more miles are driven during the **night** as a proportion of the total distance driven by young car drivers – 6 per cent of all miles travelled as a car driver are at night.

## Proportion of miles driven at night

**3%** Older drivers      **6%** Younger drivers

## Reported fatal or serious accidents involving at least one young car driver (aged 17-24) by time of day and day of week, GB: 2009 to 2013.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
00:00 - 00:59	85	57	57	63	88	195	192
01:00 - 01:59	55	47	27	47	72	177	170
02:00 - 02:59	44	23	24	41	52	144	168
03:00 - 03:59	35	32	30	19	41	119	143
04:00 - 04:59	21	17	18	15	32	90	96
05:00 - 05:59	27	24	22	27	26	72	64
06:00 - 06:59	40	51	48	50	52	65	47
07:00 - 07:59	97	132	106	132	114	70	51
08:00 - 08:59	150	174	168	177	162	88	68
09:00 - 09:59	93	84	83	98	91	99	75
10:00 - 10:59	72	68	62	75	58	103	85
11:00 - 11:59	70	89	82	69	113	129	101
12:00 - 12:59	95	105	87	86	98	159	145
13:00 - 13:59	108	110	111	105	143	183	129
14:00 - 14:59	112	108	114	115	145	163	154
15:00 - 15:59	151	172	178	179	210	168	189
16:00 - 16:59	198	229	207	212	221	196	179
17:00 - 17:59	244	252	239	289	278	193	182
18:00 - 18:59	210	229	212	223	244	212	157
19:00 - 19:59	171	190	200	203	240	222	163
20:00 - 20:59	164	180	189	172	202	172	165
21:00 - 21:59	137	153	161	148	212	170	140
22:00 - 22:59	137	146	168	161	221	198	145
23:00 - 23:59	135	85	105	116	233	183	99

**Key**  
Hours highlighted in **yellow** have a lower number of casualties  
Hours highlighted in **orange** and **red** have a higher number of casualties.

- The heat map above shows the number of KSI accidents involving at least one young car driver by hour and day of the week.
- Unsurprisingly, young car drivers are more likely to be involved in fatal or serious accidents that occur during the **busiest times of the day** when there is a high volume of traffic on the road.

- The **morning peak, between 8 am and 9 am**, and an extended **afternoon peak, from 3 pm through to 9 pm** on weekdays, stand out as having the most accidents. The Friday the afternoon and evening peak runs right through to the **early hours of Saturday morning**.
- This pattern is what would be expected, as these are the periods when the highest volume of traffic is on the roads and there are more likely to be a greater number of vehicle interactions.

**Reported fatal or serious accidents involving at least one young car driver (aged 17-24) by time of day and day of week, (100 = hourly average per mile driven) GB: 2005 to 2013.**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Key
00:00 - 00:59	626	725	465	1,152	996	830	652	Hours highlighted in <b>blue</b> have scores below a hundred which indicates fewer accidents than expected
01:00 - 01:59	2,142	696	1,190	1,289	1,960	2,143	823	
02:00 - 02:59	3,699	3,088	1,581	1,104	1,595	1,808	1,809	
03:00 - 03:59	294	216	7,602	1,112	641	971	1,968	
04:00 - 04:59	157	179	125	207	631	1,012	1,836	
05:00 - 05:59	64	84	70	78	83	352	491	
06:00 - 06:59	32	43	48	43	46	86	232	
07:00 - 07:59	33	35	36	33	35	86	84	
08:00 - 08:59	51	59	55	59	49	79	70	
09:00 - 09:59	69	70	70	76	58	53	71	
10:00 - 10:59	56	60	50	61	53	49	52	Hours highlighted in <b>red</b> have scored above a hundred which indicates more accidents than expected
11:00 - 11:59	67	74	65	51	82	54	53	
12:00 - 12:59	84	91	61	77	62	69	81	
13:00 - 13:59	88	73	103	84	74	85	61	
14:00 - 14:59	84	78	84	67	83	94	79	
15:00 - 15:59	82	87	83	90	83	76	93	
16:00 - 16:59	68	62	60	66	67	90	81	
17:00 - 17:59	66	66	62	63	64	90	116	
18:00 - 18:59	101	99	106	107	94	123	108	
19:00 - 19:59	141	133	144	142	141	140	118	
20:00 - 20:59	186	165	167	157	203	232	129	
21:00 - 21:59	190	188	224	186	297	349	195	
22:00 - 22:59	212	176	194	172	338	237	173	
23:00 - 23:59	312	212	251	241	374	265	225	

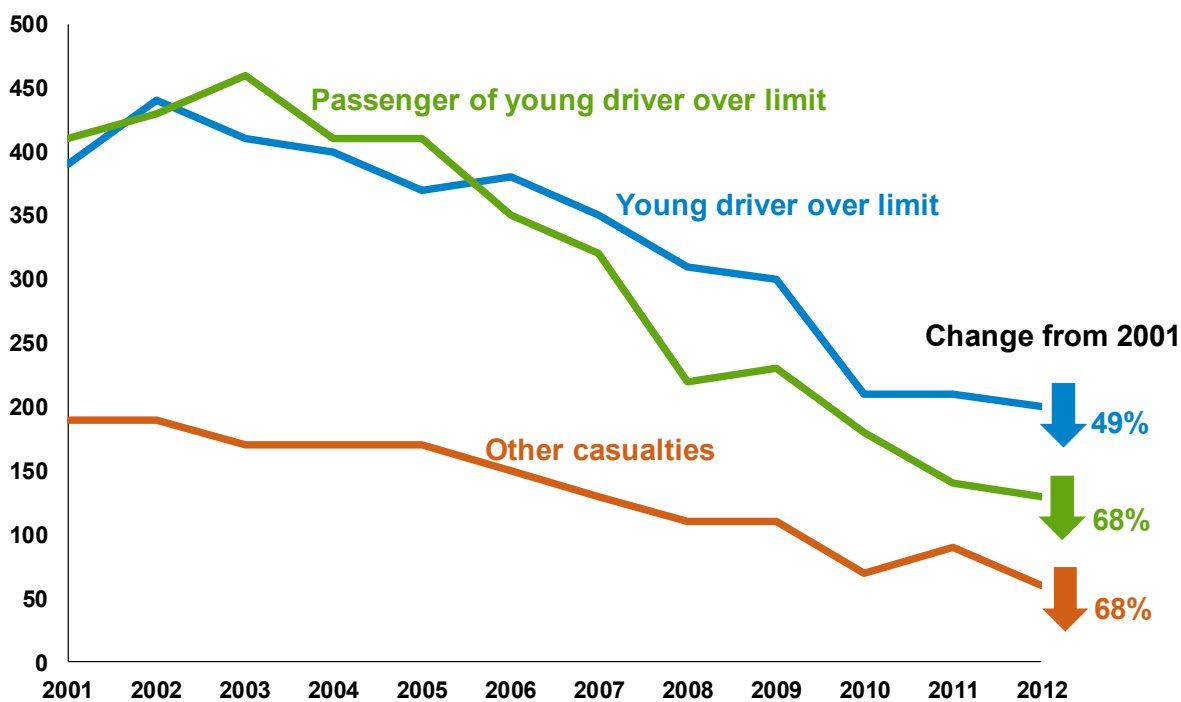
- The second heat map give an indication of the risk of KSI accidents during each hour of the day. We assume that the risk of a KSI accident per mile travelled remains the same throughout the day. A value of 100 indicates that there are as many accidents as would be expected during that hour given the distance travelled during that hour. Scores **below 100** indicate that there are **fewer accidents** than would be expected, and scores **above 100** indicate that there are **more accidents** than would be expected. For instance, an hour with a score of 50 has roughly 50 per cent (or half) of the expected number of accidents. An hour with a score of 200 has roughly 200 per cent (or twice the number) of the expected number of accidents.
- This therefore give an indication **of what times of the day and week have greater risk of accidents involving at least one young car driver**. This is not necessarily the same time of the day as when the most accidents occur.
- As shown in the first heat map, the greatest number of accidents will happen during the busiest times of the day, when there is a lot of traffic on the road.
- The second heat map suggests, in contrast, that there are **fewer accidents than expected during most of the daytime hours**, including over the morning peak and the early afternoon peak.



- The hours with the **greater risk are in the evening through to the early hours of the morning**, with highest risk times between midnight and 3 / 4 am in the week, through to 5 / 6 am at the weekend.
- The highest risk periods are at times when traffic on the roads will be relatively low and there are a disproportionate number of young drivers travelling. There could be a number of factors contributing to this pattern, from an increased likelihood of drivers driving when under the influence of alcohol, through to drivers driving more quickly and recklessly as there is less traffic to slow them down.

## Young drink drivers

### Killed and seriously injured casualties in reported accidents involving young drivers



- The majority (85 per cent) of casualties killed or seriously injured in drink drive accidents involving young car drivers are the **young drink drivers and their passengers**.
- Although there has been a little change in the number of casualties in drink drive accidents involving young car drivers between 2011 and 2012, they remain **well below the levels seen previously**. Since 2002, KSI casualties in drink drive accidents involving young car drivers have fallen by more than 60 per cent.
- However, young drink drive accidents still account for a **disproportionate** number of drink drive casualties – around a quarter of drink drive fatalities and a third of seriously injured drink drive fatalities casualties arise from accidents in which a young driver was over the limit.
- Across the age groups, young drivers have the highest **drink drive accident rates**. In 2012 there were **62 drink drive accidents per 100 thousand licence holders** and **216 drink drive accidents per billion miles driven**. Comparing rates by mileage, young car drivers are between **four** and **five** times more likely to be in a drink drive accident than older drivers aged 25 and above.

## Why are young drivers involved in accidents?

Contributory factors provide an insight into how and why accidents occur. The factors are largely subjective as they reflect the opinion of the reporting officer, therefore they should be interpreted with caution. A maximum of six factors can be recorded for each accident.

The table below shows a comparison of the top contributory factors in accidents involving at least one young car driver aged 17 to 24 with those allocated to older drivers over 60 years old and drivers of all ages.

### A comparison of contributory factors in accidents involving at least one young car driver and accidents involving at least one older car driver (aged 60 & over), GB: 2013.

Contributory factor attributed to drivers <sup>1</sup>	Drivers aged 17-24		Drivers aged 60+		All Drivers	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Failed to look properly	9,402	35	9,693	44	41,919	42
Failed to judge other person's path	5,842	22	5,422	25	22,682	23
Careless reckless or in a hurry	4,397	17	2,724	12	15,410	15
Loss of control	4,153	16	2,310	11	12,157	12
Poor turn or manoeuvre	3,416	13	3,153	14	13,907	14
Travelling too fast for conditions	2,562	10	988	4	6,773	7
Learner or inexperienced driver	2,630	10	412	2	3,819	4
Slippery road due to weather	3,055	11	1,289	6	8,856	9
Sudden braking	2,077	8	1,297	6	6,770	7
Exceeding speeding limit	1,746	7	626	3	4,273	4
Illness or disability, mental or physical	203	1	1,144	5	1,989	2
<b>Total<sup>2,3</sup></b>	<b>26,628</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21,994</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100,794</b>	<b>100</b>

1. Includes only accidents where a police officer attended the scene and a contributory factor was reported

2. Total number of accidents involving a driver allocated a contributory factor, excludes cases where no contributory factor was reported.

3. Columns may not add up to 100 per cent as drivers can have more than one contributory factor

- Young car drivers are more likely to have at least one contributory factor allocated to them than older drivers. The most common contributory factor allocated to young car drivers was **failed to look properly**.
- In 2013, 35 per cent of young car drivers failed to look properly. This is also the most common factor with drivers of all ages, as 42 per cent of them also failed to look properly.
- Young car drivers are more likely to have factors relating to **inexperience** (10 per cent in 2013), compared to older car drivers (only two per cent in 2013).
- Young car drivers are also more likely to be allocated **factors related to risky behaviour**. In 2013 17 per cent of young car drivers in road accidents were **careless, reckless or in a hurry**, 16 per cent were allocated a **loss of control** contributory factor and 22 per cent were either **travelling too fast for conditions** or performed a **poor turn or manoeuvre**.
- Young car drivers are also likely to be **travelling too fast for conditions or exceeding speed limits on rural roads**. In 2013 around 32 per cent of young car **drivers killed or seriously injured** were recorded to be either exceeding the speed limit or travelling too fast for conditions on rural roads, a further 20 per cent were killed or seriously injured **while going round a bend**.

- 
- As contributory factors are based on the judgement of police officers, some of the findings might **reflect preconceptions** of officers. For instance, they may be more likely to allocate the factor of *inexperience* to a younger driver than an older driver.

## References and further information

Further information about the Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2013 can be found at: [Reported road casualties Great Britain: annual report 2013 - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

Notes and definitions used in Stats19 can be found at: [Road accidents and safety statistics guidance - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

Further information on driver licences and distance travelled published by the National Travel Survey can be found at: [National Travel Survey: 2013 - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

More information on the valuations of road accidents and casualties in Great Britain can be found at:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/244913/rrcgb2012-02.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/244913/rrcgb2012-02.pdf)

More information on traffic estimates used in this factsheet are published by the Road Traffic statistics team at: [Road traffic statistics - GOV.UK](#)