Burglary, Robbery, and Theft

While robbery, burglary, and theft all involve the loss of items of value, these crimes also differ. Robbery is both a violent crime and one that involves property. Robbery victims are immediately aware of the crime because they are present when it takes place. Burglary, however, is a theft from a dwelling or structure that may or may not be inhabited at the time of the crime. (The crime escalates to robbery if someone is present in the structure when it is entered.) A disproportionate number of burglaries, robberies, and thefts occur in metropolitan areas. Since 2002, the overall occurrence of household property crimes (household burglaries, motor vehicle thefts, and thefts) has decreased by more than 18 percent and robberies have decreased by 20 percent. From 2010 to 2011, these rates increased by 11 percent and decreased by 3 percent, respectively. While the dollar value of these crimes is difficult to pinpoint, especially accounting for the intangible effects of victimization, total losses to victims from property crimes (which include burglary and larceny-theft) amount to billions of dollars every year.2

- In 2011, 2,188,005 burglaries occurred in the United States, at a rate of 702.2 per 100,000 inhabitants.3
- In 2011, the volume of burglary in the United States increased by 0.9 percent, and the rate per 100,000 people increased by 0.2 percent.4
- Between 2010 and 2011, the rate of robberies in the United States decreased 4.0 percent.5 Larceny-theft crimes, the unlawful taking of property, decreased 1.4 percent.6 The rate of overall property victimization increased 11 percent during this time.7
- Between 2010 and 2011, the rate of robberies decreased by 4.7 percent. The estimated number of motor vehicle thefts decreased 4.0 percent; larceny-theft decreased 1.4 percent; and burglary increased 0.2 percent.8
- As reported by victims in 2011, 52.7 percent of robberies of male victims were committed by a stranger, and 40.4 percent of robberies of female victims were committed by a stranger.9

- As reported by victims in 2011, 42 percent of robberies involved no weapons. Firearms were used in 25.7 percent of robberies, and a knife was used in 10.8 percent of robberies.10
- In 2011, burglaries occurred at a rate of 584.6 per 100,000 inhabitants in metropolitan counties of more than 100,000. The number of burglaries known was 240,309.11 Metropolitan counties with populations between 25,000 and 99,999 recorded 120,875 known burglaries, or a rate of 546.4 per 100,000 inhabitants. In non-metropolitan counties with more than 25,000 inhabitants, burglaries occurred at a rate of 611.9 per 100,000; the number of known burglaries was 71,535.12

- In 2011, the number of known burglaries by forcible entry was 1,186,204. The number of burglaries by unlawful entry known to law enforcement was 648,484.13
- In 2011, 557,214 burglaries were committed at nonresidential (store, office, etc.) locations; 1,630,791 burglaries occurred in residences in the United States. Of the burglaries occurring at residences in 2011, 442,970 of those occurred at night and 860,425 occurred during the day.14
- The rate of robberies per 100,000 inhabitants in the metropolitan counties with over 100,000 inhabitants was 74.2 in 2011, while the same rate for the most densely populated

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11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
non-metropolitan counties (with 25,000 or more residents) was 17.6.\textsuperscript{15}

- Of all reported robbery cases, 127,521 involved a firearm and 129,606 cases involved a strong-arm (the use or threatened use of hands, arms, feet, fists, or teeth as weapons to deprive the victim of property).\textsuperscript{16}

- The rate of robbery involving a firearm was the highest (28.3 per 100,000 inhabitants) in metropolitan counties. However, the rate of robberies involving a strong-arm was highest in suburban areas (26.7 per 100,000 inhabitants).\textsuperscript{17}

- In 2011, there were an estimated 6,159,795 larceny-thefts nationwide.\textsuperscript{18}

- In metropolitan counties in 2011, there were 919,323 cases of larceny-theft, which is a rate of 1,354.7 per 100,000 inhabitants.\textsuperscript{19}

- Property crime decreased 0.5 percent from 2010 to 2011. The 5-year trend (see chart below) showed a 8.3 percent decrease between 2007 and 2011.\textsuperscript{20}

- Of all property crimes in 2011, 68.0 percent were larceny-theft and 24.1 percent were burglaries.\textsuperscript{21}

According to the chart below, property crime rates decreased from 2007 to 2011. In 2011, property crime rates per 100,000 inhabitants were:

- 3,041 in 2007
- 2,942 in 2008
- 2,909 in 2009
- 2,642 in 2010
- 2,900 in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Property Crime Rates per 100,000 Inhabitants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>3,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3,215</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2,900</td>
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</tbody>
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### Types of Property Crime

- **Larceny-Theft:** 68%
- **Burglaries:** 24.1%
- **Other*:** 7.9%

* Other crimes include arson and motor vehicle theft.

In 2011, victims reported a rate of property crime victimizations of 138.7 per 1,000 households.\textsuperscript{22}

Motor vehicle theft accounted for 24.8 percent of all thefts in 2011. Shoplifting accounted for 17.5 percent.\textsuperscript{23}

In 2011, victims reported 37 percent of property crimes to police. Law enforcement received reports on 52 percent of burglaries, 83 percent of motor vehicular thefts, and 30 percent of thefts.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., table 14.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22} Truman and Planty, Criminal Victimization, 2011, table 4.
\textsuperscript{24} Truman and Planty, Criminal Victimization, 2011, table 8.