

Statistical release on Vehicle Speeds in Great Britain: 2006

These statistics relate to the speeds at which drivers travel in free-flow conditions across the road network

- The level of cars exceeding the speed limit varies considerably between road types. The highest level of cars travelling over the speed limit occurred on motorways (54 per cent). This compares to 56 per cent in 2005. The lowest level was on single carriageway roads, with a speed limit of 60 mph, where 11 per cent of cars were driven over the speed limit.
- In 2006, nearly half (49 per cent) of all car drivers on 30 mph built-up roads exceeded the speed limit compared with 65 per cent in 2001 and 72 per cent ten years earlier in 1996. On 40 mph built-up roads, 28 per cent of car drivers exceeded the speed limit, this is an increase of 4 per cent on the 2005 level.
- The percentage of motorcyclists who exceeded the speed limit was similar to that of car drivers. However, the percentage of motorcycles travelling at more than 10 mph above the speed limit on all road types was higher. Twenty five per cent of motorcyclists travelled at 80 mph or more on motorways compared with 17 per cent of car drivers. This compared with 27 per cent and 19 per cent respectively in 2005.
- On major non built-up single carriageway roads, 76 per cent of articulated heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) exceeded their 40 mph limit (28 per cent by more than 10 mph). The average speed recorded for articulated HGVs on these roads was 46 mph, just 2 mph less than the average speed of cars (48 mph), for which the limit on these roads is 60 mph.
- The survey also reveals a high incidence of speeding by HGVs on 30 mph roads: 44 per cent of 2-axle HGVs exceeded the speed limit, 15 per cent by more than 5 mph. This compares with 46 per cent and 18 per cent respectively in 2005.

Notes

1. Published on 5 April 2007. Further figures and details will be published in Road Statistics 2006: Traffic, Speeds and Congestion in July 2007.
2. Data for this survey are collated from 36 sites where a 30 or 40 mph limit applies and at 60 other sites. The sites have been selected so that speeds are not seriously constrained by road layout, traffic congestion or by the proximity of speed cameras. The speeds are recorded as vehicles pass over an automatic counter and do not represent speeds over a longer distance. They do however provide an indication of compliance with speed limits.
3. Outside built-up areas, the normal speed limits currently in force are as follows:-

	Motorway	Dual C/way	Single C/way
Cars and Motorcycles	70	70	60
Buses and Coaches	70	60	50
HGVs (>7.5 tonnes)	60	50	40

4. None of the survey sites in built-up areas were subject to a speed limit lower than 30 mph.

Publication details

Published on 5 April 2007 by Transport Statistics

Email [roadtraff.manual@dft.gsi.gov.uk \(mailto:roadtraff.manual@dft.gsi.gov.uk\)](mailto:roadtraff.manual@dft.gsi.gov.uk) for queries concerning this statistical release.

Table A Vehicle speeds on non-built-up roads by road type and vehicle type: Great Britain: 2006

	miles per hour/per cent/number of vehicles									
						Heavy goods vehicles ³				
						Rigid			Articulated	
	Motor-cycles ¹	Cars	Cars towing	Light goods ²	Buses/coaches	2 axle ⁴	3 axle	4 axle	4 axles	5+ axles
Under 50 mph	5	5	16	5	6	8	13	16	9	10
50-59 mph	21	13	51	15	45	43	79	82	87	89
60-64 mph	8	12	19	13	40	15	6	1	2	1
65-69 mph	12	17	9	17	5	14	1	0	1	0
70-74 mph	15	20	4	18	2	10	0	0	1	0
75-79 mph	14	16	1	15	0	5	0	0	0	0
80-89 mph	18	15	0	14	0	4	0	0	0	0
90 mph and over	7	3	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Speed limit	70	70	60	70	70	n/a	60	60	60	60
% more than 10 mph over the limit	25	17	5	17	1	n/a	0	1	1	0
Average speed	70	70	57	69	59	61	54	53	54	53
Number observed (thousands)	3,288	448,555	3,405	62,215	2,184	29,904	2,825	1,770	8,289	41,265
(b) Dual carriageways (7 sites)										
Under 30 mph	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30-39 mph	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	1
40-49 mph	5	3	18	4	10	10	21	20	20	15
50-59 mph	25	16	51	19	52	47	74	77	75	83
60-64 mph	9	16	16	16	30	15	3	1	2	1
65-69 mph	12	20	8	19	4	12	0	0	1	0
70-79 mph	28	33	4	31	2	12	0	0	1	0
80 mph and over	20	12	0	12	0	3	0	0	0	0
Speed limit	70	70	60	70	60	n/a	50	50	50	50
% more than 10 mph over the limit	20	12	5	12	2	n/a	3	1	4	1
Average speed	68	68	56	68	57	60	52	52	53	53
Number observed (thousands)	450	49,332	424	5,514	226	2,443	301	206	548	2,673
(c) Single carriageways (26 sites)										
Under 20 mph	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
20-29 mph	3	2	6	2	3	3	5	5	4	2
30-39 mph	12	15	19	16	22	19	25	25	22	21
40-49 mph	29	41	49	41	50	46	50	47	50	48
50-59 mph	27	31	22	30	22	26	18	21	22	28
60-64 mph	9	6	2	6	2	3	0	0	1	1
65-69 mph	6	3	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
70 mph and over	12	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Speed limit	60	60	50	60	50	n/a	40	40	40	40
% more than 10 mph over the limit	12	2	3	2	3	n/a	19	22	23	29
Average speed	53	48	44	48	45	46	43	44	44	46
Number observed (thousands)	483	47,705	579	5,384	292	2,118	329	214	422	2,214

1 Motorcycles includes mopeds and other types of powered two wheeled vehicles.

2 Goods vehicles under 3.5 tonnes gross weight

3 Goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gross weight

4 Speed limit depends on loading which cannot be determined

Note: Some figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit, there may be an apparent slight discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total as shown.

Table B: Vehicle speeds on built-up roads by speed limit and vehicle type: 2006

(a) 30 mph speed limit roads (26 sites)

miles per hour/*per cent* / number of vehicles

	Motorcycles ¹	Cars	Cars towing	Light goods ²	Buses/ coaches	Heavy goods vehicles ³				
						Rigid			Articulated	
						2 axle	3 axle	4 axle	4 axles	5+ axles
Under 20 mph	11	6	7	7	10	9	7	5	7	3
20 - 29 mph	38	44	48	42	62	47	48	45	46	46
30 - 34 mph	26	31	33	31	21	29	34	36	33	39
35 - 39 mph	14	13	10	14	6	11	9	11	10	11
40 - 44 mph	6	4	2	4	1	3	1	2	2	2
45-49 mph	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
50 mph and over	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% 35 mph and over	25	19	12	19	7	15	11	14	13	13
Average speed	30	30	29	30	27	29	29	30	29	30
Number observed (thousands)	726	63,956	158	5,835	484	1,733	143	137	97	194

(b) 40 mph speed limit roads (10 sites)

miles per hour/*per cent* / number of vehicles

	Motorcycles ¹	Cars	Cars towing	Light goods ²	Buses/ coaches	Heavy goods vehicles ³				
						Rigid			Articulated	
						2 axle	3 axle	4 axle	4 axles	5+ axles
Under 20 mph	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	2
20 - 29 mph	10	11	16	11	14	15	12	9	13	12
30 - 34 mph	20	25	28	24	31	26	22	20	25	23
35 - 39 mph	28	34	35	32	37	32	40	41	38	42
40 - 44 mph	19	17	14	17	11	15	18	21	15	16
45 - 49 mph	11	7	4	8	3	6	4	5	4	3
50 - 59 mph	7	3	1	4	1	2	1	1	1	1
60 mph and over	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
% 45 mph and over	20	10	4	12	4	9	5	7	6	4
Average speed	38	36	35	37	35	36	36	37	35	36
Number observed (thousands)	710	47,452	219	4,688	416	1,431	238	168	177	472

1 Motorcycles includes mopeds and other types of powered two wheeled vehicles.

2 Goods vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes gross weight.

3 Goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gross weight.

Note: Some figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit, there may be an apparent slight discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total as shown.