

Sourcebook of criminal justice statistics Online

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Table 5.23.2010

Criminal defendants sentenced in U.S. District Courts

By type and length of sentence, 1945-2010

	Type of sentence											Average sentence to imprisonment (in months) ^f	Average sentence to probation (in months) ^g
	Total ^b	Imprisonment					Split sentence ^c	Indeterminate ^d	Pro-bation	Fine	Other ^e		
		Total regular	Regular sentences ^a										
		1 through 12 months	13 through 35 months	36 through 60 months	Over 60 months								
1945	17,095	X	10,522	3,634	2,017	922	X	X	14,359	4,660	X	16.5	NA
1946	15,393	X	9,316	3,610	1,809	658	X	X	12,691	4,095	X	18.6	NA
1947	15,146	X	9,033	3,679	1,746	688	X	X	13,318	4,124	X	17.3	NA
1948	13,505	X	8,033	3,329	1,517	626	X	X	14,014	3,001	X	17.6	NA
1949	14,730	X	9,389	3,378	1,392	571	X	X	15,161	3,182	X	15.8	NA
1950	14,998	X	8,910	3,799	1,588	701	X	X	16,603	3,024	X	17.5	NA
1951	15,568	X	9,215	3,758	1,805	790	X	X	19,855	2,767	X	18.1	NA
1952	15,963	X	9,094	3,817	2,072	980	X	X	17,687	2,393	X	19.1	NA
1953	16,355	X	8,969	4,213	2,164	1,009	X	X	15,811	2,719	X	19.4	NA
1954	19,221	X	10,977	4,546	2,487	1,211	X	X	17,517	2,806	X	18.9	NA
1955	17,542	X	8,942	4,584	2,724	1,292	X	X	14,584	2,945	X	21.9	NA
1956	13,576	X	5,681	4,217	2,478	1,200	X	X	12,365	2,955	X	24.9	NA
1957	13,798	X	5,473	4,018	2,635	1,672	X	X	11,434	2,508	X	28.0	NA
1958	14,101	X	5,382	4,029	2,861	1,829	X	X	11,617	2,620	X	28.2	NA
1959	14,350	X	5,024	3,680	3,237	1,849	(c)	X	11,379	2,660	X	29.2	NA
1960	14,170	X	5,024	3,877	3,288	1,981	(c)	X	11,081	2,905	X	29.6	NA
1961	14,462	X	4,057	4,753	3,481	2,171	(c)	X	10,714	2,772	677	31.0	NA
1962	14,042	X	4,088	4,441	3,418	2,095	(c)	X	11,071	2,618	780	32.0	NA
1963	13,639	X	2,949	4,218	3,228	2,076	1,168	X	12,047	2,847	1,270	32.3	NA
1964	13,273	X	2,992	4,085	3,094	1,987	1,115	X	11,634	2,689	1,574	31.9	NA
1965	13,668	X	3,748	3,139	3,262	2,252	1,267	X	10,779	2,477	1,833	33.5	NA
1966	13,282	X	3,549	2,926	3,332	2,092	1,383	X	10,256	2,356	1,420	32.9	NA
1967	13,085	X	3,236	2,837	3,411	2,381	1,220	X	9,435	2,293	1,531	36.5	NA
1968	12,610	X	2,473	2,413	3,568	2,915	1,241	X	9,820	1,816	1,428	42.2	NA
1969	12,847	X	2,771	2,252	3,500	3,012	1,312	X	9,991	1,682	2,283	42.0	NA
1970	12,415	X	2,753	2,253	3,290	2,775	1,344	X	11,387	1,935	2,441	41.1	NA
1971	14,378	X	2,820	2,599	3,326	3,482	2,151	X	13,243	1,789	2,693	42.1	NA
1972	16,832	X	4,450	2,645	3,695	3,569	2,473	X	15,395	2,232	2,761	38.1	NA
1973	17,540	X	3,384	2,912	4,141	4,220	2,883	X	15,026	1,866	551	15.4	NA
1974	17,180	X	3,333	2,880	4,107	3,960	2,900	X	16,623	2,078	349	42.2	NA
1975	17,301	X	3,337	2,825	4,437	4,387	2,315	X	17,913	1,876	343	45.5	NA
1976	18,477	X	3,530	3,096	4,731	4,862	2,258	X	18,208	3,199	228	47.2	NA
1977	19,552	13,772	4,016	2,938	2,953	3,865	3,217	1,604	16,135	5,409	360	34.7	32.8
1978	17,426	12,234	3,284	2,804	2,792	3,354	3,263	1,132	14,525	4,279	285	48.6	32.4
1979	14,580	9,818	2,320	2,344	2,389	2,765	3,234	887	13,459	4,368	506	49.0	32.3
1980	13,191	8,484	2,016	1,936	1,945	2,587	3,012	1,123	11,053	3,916	438	51.9	33.1
1981	13,700	8,906	2,192	1,904	1,906	2,906	3,069	1,232	12,173	3,507	488	55.3	31.7
1982	15,857	10,673	2,202	2,313	2,422	3,736	3,538	1,163	12,723	3,395	277	58.6	32.2
1983	17,886	11,979	2,503	2,671	2,543	4,262	3,973	1,496	14,097	3,220	388	57.2	33.5
1984	17,710	11,828	2,282	2,666	2,628	4,252	4,063	1,482	13,880	3,977	537	58.0	35.0
1985	18,679	12,910	2,285	2,886	2,995	4,744	4,084	1,494	14,404	4,830	617	60.2	35.2
1986	20,261	15,004	2,393	3,251	3,529	5,831	4,397	1,200	15,230	4,232	657	64.6	35.5
1987	23,344	17,556	2,661	3,850	3,942	7,103	4,524	1,257	16,023	4,368	207	65.4	35.2
1988	22,473	17,605	3,070	3,721	3,291	7,523	4,014	848	16,057	4,087	285	66.1	34.0
1989	24,867	21,485	5,057	5,301	3,463	7,664	2,676	706	14,997	4,193	467	58.6	32.9
1990	27,796	25,768	6,701	6,466	3,305	9,296	1,716	312	14,196	4,176	557	59.2	32.7
1991	29,189	28,809	7,896	6,667	5,123	9,123	NA	NA	13,754	3,772	53	69.6	42.7
1992	32,866	31,895	8,281	8,073	5,650	9,891	NA	NA	13,299	3,985	109	65.6	32.3
1993	35,001	33,664	8,493	8,241	6,790	10,140	NA	NA	12,775	3,870	77	63.9	32.1
1994	33,554	32,075	7,856	8,116	6,535	9,568	NA	NA	12,409	3,650	52	64.1	32.3
1995	32,439	31,112	7,806	8,226	5,807	9,273	NA	NA	11,288	2,875	171	66.4	32.5
1996	37,579	35,556	8,597	9,606	6,811	10,542	NA	NA	11,526	2,929	229	61.4	32.3
1997	41,105	38,419	9,086	11,054	7,547	10,732	NA	NA	11,656	2,672	215	58.8	32.7
1998	45,166	42,085	9,750	12,004	8,359	11,972	NA	NA	11,708	2,732	279	58.8	32.7
1999	50,076	46,653	10,667	13,092	9,842	13,052	NA	NA	11,986	2,495	258	57.7	33.1
2000	53,047	49,536	11,306	13,860	10,686	13,684	NA	NA	11,517	2,241	231	56.6	33.0
2001	53,910	50,318	10,953	14,279	11,165	13,921	NA	NA	11,160	2,351	310	56.5	33.0
2002	56,686	52,776	10,965	15,802	11,229	14,780	NA	NA	11,474	2,427	295	56.9	33.5
2003	61,102	56,737	11,628	16,587	12,415	16,107	NA	NA	10,997	2,435	316	58.6	32.2
2004	60,676	57,037	11,467	16,221	12,583	16,766	NA	NA	10,218	2,225	497	59.5	30.3
2005	64,614	60,396	11,824	16,750	13,501	18,321	NA	NA	9,889	2,065	771	61.2	32.8
2006	67,257	63,279	11,688	16,880	14,418	20,293	NA	NA	9,734	1,946	788	63.7	32.6
2007	66,452	62,216	12,379	16,202	13,844	19,791	NA	NA	9,514	2,145	750	63.1	32.5
2008	69,768	64,016	13,609	17,020	13,931	19,456	NA	NA	9,401	2,423	857	60.6	33.8
2009	73,980	66,687	16,075	17,640	14,116	18,856	NA	NA	9,211	2,347	776	57.2	35.0
2010	77,239	69,216	17,707	18,565	14,571	18,373	NA	NA	9,533	2,345	624	54.0	34.8

See notes on next page.

Table 5.23.2010

Criminal defendants sentenced in U.S. District Courts

By type and length of sentence, 1945-2010--Continued

Note: Data for 1945-91 are reported for the 12-month period ending June 30. Beginning in 1992, data are reported for the Federal fiscal year, which is the 12-month period ending September 30. Between 1991 and 2004, defendants charged in two or more cases that were terminated during the year are counted only once. Beginning in 2005, defendants charged in two or more cases that were terminated during the year are counted separately for each case.

Prior to 1977, the periods reported for lengths of sentences to imprisonment were 1 year and 1 day and under, over 1 year and 1 day to 3 years, 3 to 5 years, and 5 years and over. Beginning in 1977, the periods reported for lengths of sentences to imprisonment are 1 through 12 months, 13 through 35 months, 36 through 59 months, and 60 months and over. Beginning in 1991, two of the periods reported for lengths of sentences to imprisonment changed. The period 36 through 59 months changed to 36 through 60 months, and the period 60 months and over changed to over 60 months.

^aIncludes sentences of more than 6 months that are to be followed by a term of probation (mixed sentences). Beginning in 1991, includes sentences of at least 1 month that may be followed by a term of probation.

^bPrior to 1989, total includes Youth Corrections Act and youthful offender sentences not separately enumerated. From 1979-85, total includes Federal Juvenile Delinquency Act sentences not separately enumerated. Beginning in 1991, total includes life sentences, death sentences, and cases with either no sentence, a suspended sentence, a sealed sentence, deportation, or imprisonment of 4 days or less.

^cA "split sentence" is a sentence on a one-count indictment of 6 months or less in a jail-type institution followed by a term of probation, 18 U.S.C. 3651 approved Aug. 23, 1958 (72 Stat. 834). Included are mixed sentences involving confinement for 6 months or less on one count to be followed by a term of probation on one or more counts. For 1959-62, split sentences were included in prison terms of 1 year and 1 day and under (see Note).
^d18 U.S.C. 4205B(1) and (2).

^eFrom 1945-60, "other" was included with sentences of probation. From 1986-90, "other" included deportation, suspended sentences, imprisonment for 4 days or less, time already served, remitted and suspended fines, and life sentences. Beginning in 1991, "other" includes supervised releases, probation of 4 days or less, suspended sentences, sealed sentences, and no sentence.

^fFrom 1977-90, split sentences, Youth Corrections Act and youthful offender sentences, and life sentences were not included in computing average sentence. Beginning in 1991, life sentences, death sentences, deportation, suspended and sealed sentences, imprisonment of 4 days or less, and no sentence also are not included in computing average sentence.

^gFrom 1986-90, split sentences, indeterminate sentences, and Youth Corrections Act and youthful offender sentences were not included in computing average sentence. Beginning in 1991, supervised releases, probation of 4 days or less, suspended sentences, sealed sentences, and no sentence also are not included in computing average sentence.

Source: Administrative Office of the United States Courts, *Federal Offenders in the United States District Courts July 1973-June 1974* (Washington, DC: Administrative Office of the United States Courts, 1977), p. H-1; Administrative Office of the United States Courts, *Annual Report of the Director, 1979*, p. 108; **1981**, p. 101, Table 46; **1983**, p. 171; **1985**, p. 180; **1986**, pp. 271-278; **1995**, pp. 228-231; **1998**, pp. 231-234; **1999**, pp. 225-228 (Washington, DC: Administrative Office of the United States Courts); Administrative Office of the United States Courts, *Annual Report of the Director, 1982*, p. 141; **1987**, pp. 294-304; **1988**, pp. 297-304; **1989**, pp. 295-302; **1990**, pp. 204-207; **1991**, pp. 256, 257, 262, 263; **1992**, pp. 269-272, 276-279; **1993**, Tables D-5, D-7; **1994**, Tables D-5, D-7; **1996**, pp. 224-227; **1997**, pp. 217-220 (Washington, DC: USGPO); and Administrative Office of the United States Courts, *Judicial Business of the United States Courts: 2000 Annual Report of the Director*, pp. 224-227; **2001 Annual Report of the Director**, pp. 214-217; **2002 Annual Report of the Director**, pp. 214-217; **2003 Annual Report of the Director**, pp. 214-217; **2004 Annual Report of the Director**, pp. 220-223; **2005 Annual Report of the Director**, p. 249; **2006 Annual Report of the Director**, p. 253; **2007 Annual Report of the Director**, p. 250; **2008 Annual Report of the Director**, p. 248; **2009 Annual Report of the Director**, p. 243; **2010 Annual Report of the Director**, p. 246 (Washington, DC: USGPO). Table adapted by SOURCEBOOK staff.