

Table 6.18

Characteristics of jail inmates

By conviction status, United States, 1983, 1989, 1996, and 2002

	Percent of jail inmates						
	1983	1989	1996	2002			
				Total	Convicted	Unconvicted	Both ^a
Number of jail inmates	223,552	395,554	507,026	631,241	394,039	182,754	100,495
Sex							
Male	92.9%	90.5%	89.8%	88.4%	87.7%	89.2%	89.6%
Female	7.1	9.5	10.2	11.6	12.3	10.8	10.4
Race, Hispanic origin^b							
White, non-Hispanic	46.4	38.6	37.4	36.0	39.4	31.0	33.3
Black, non-Hispanic	37.5	41.7	40.9	40.1	37.3	43.0	44.1
Hispanic	14.3	17.4	18.5	18.5	18.5	19.6	16.6
American Indian, Alaska Native	NA	NA	2.4	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.6
Asian, Pacific Islander	NA	NA	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.7	0.9
Other ^c	1.8	2.3	NA	3.0	2.6	3.3	3.6
Age							
17 years and younger	1.3	1.5	2.3	1.8	1.2	2.9	1.6
18 to 24 years	40.4	32.6	28.5	28.1	28.3	28.9	26.4
25 to 34 years	38.6	42.9	37.4	31.9	31.0	31.8	35.4
35 to 44 years	12.4	16.7	23.9	26.0	27.1	24.2	25.2
45 to 54 years	4.9	4.6	6.3	10.0	10.2	9.4	10.4
55 years and older	2.4	1.7	1.5	2.2	2.2	2.8	1.0
Marital status							
Married	21.0	19.0	15.7	16.2	15.8	16.5	17.3
Widowed	1.4	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.5	1.1
Divorced	15.7	15.1	15.6	15.7	16.3	14.7	15.5
Separated	7.9	8.2	8.7	6.7	7.5	5.6	6.3
Never married	54.1	56.7	58.6	60.1	59.3	61.7	59.8
Education^d							
8th grade or less	17.7	15.6	13.1	12.3	11.8	14.3	10.6
Some high school	41.3	38.2	33.4	31.6	30.6	32.7	33.4
GED	NA	NA	14.1	17.1	18.2	14.1	18.6
High school diploma	29.2	33.1	25.9	25.9	26.1	26.2	24.6
Some college	11.8	13.1	10.3	10.1	10.5	9.7	9.6
College graduate or more	NA	NA	3.2	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.1
Military service							
Veteran	21.2	15.5	11.7	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nonveteran	78.8	84.5	88.3	NA	NA	NA	NA
U.S. citizenship							
Citizen	NA	NA	91.8	92.2	92.6	89.5	95.8
Noncitizen	NA	NA	8.2	7.8	7.4	10.5	4.2

Note: These data are from the Survey of Inmates in Local Jails conducted for the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau in 1983, 1989, 1996, and 2002. For the 2002 survey, a nationally representative sample of 6,982 inmates in 417 local jails were interviewed between January and April 2002. A jail is defined as a locally operated correctional facility that confines a person before or after adjudication. Inmates sentenced to jail usually have a sentence of 1 year or less, but jails also incarcerate persons in a wide variety of other categories. Jails may also house inmates awaiting transfer to other correctional or mental health facilities, those awaiting trials or sentencing, and those being held in protective custody, for contempt, or as court witnesses. These data are estimates derived from a sample and therefore subject to sampling variation. For information on methodology and survey sampling procedures, see [Appendix 4](#).

^aIncludes inmates with a prior conviction, but no new conviction for the current charge.

^bExcludes 0.3% of inmates in 1996 and 2002 who did not specify a race.

^cPrior to 1996, category includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians, Alaska Natives, and other racial groups. After 1996, category includes inmates specifying more than one race.

^dBeginning with the 1996 survey, inmates with less than a high school diploma were asked specifically if they had a GED. Those reporting that they had a GED or high school equivalency certificate were classified as high school graduates. Prior to the 1996 survey, GED was a volunteered response.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Profile of Jail Inmates, 1996*, Special Report NCJ-164620, p. 3; *2002*, Special Report NCJ 201932, p. 2, Table 1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice). Table adapted by SOURCEBOOK staff.