Utah Crash Facts 2018

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2018 Utah Crash Flow Chart

Total Crashes
62,074

Property Damage Only Crashes
43,860

Injury Crashes
17,977

Fatal Crashes
237

People Not Injured
130,352

People Injured
25,645

People Killed
260
Overview

In 2018:

- 62,074 motor vehicle crashes occurred in Utah, including 237 fatal crashes, which resulted in 25,645 injured persons and 260 deaths.

- On average, a motor vehicle crash occurred in Utah every 8.5 minutes, a person was injured in a crash every 20.5 minutes, and a person died in a crash every 33.7 hours.

- Traffic deaths per vehicle miles traveled have decreased in the last 3 years, to levels equivalent to those in 2012-2013.

Driver Contributing Circumstances* for All Crashes in 2018 (% of all crashes)

1. Followed too Closely (21%)
2. Failed to Yield the Right-of-Way (17%)
3. Speed (11%)
4. Failed to Keep in Proper Lane (9%)
5. Improper Lane Change (4%)

Driver distraction was a factor in 8.9% of all crashes

Driver Contributing Circumstances* for Fatal Crashes in 2018 (% of fatal crashes)

1. Failed to keep in proper lane (21%)
2. Speed (20%)
3. Failed to Yield the Right-of-Way (9%)
4. Ran Off Road (6%)
5. Disregard Traffic Signals (4%)

Drivers age 15-24 years had the highest crash rates per licensed driver.

* Based on data from driver of vehicle number 1
Overview

**Motor Vehicle Crashes by Hour (Utah 2018)**

- Crashes were the highest between 3:00 p.m. and 7 p.m.

**Traffic Crashes by Year (Utah 2009-2018)**

- The total number of crashes remained at similar levels in the last three years, between 2016 and 2018.

**County Crash Rates by Miles Traveled (Utah 2018)**

- Salt Lake, Weber, Cache and Utah counties (in that order) had the highest crash rates per miles traveled.

**Urban/Rural Location (Utah 2018)**

- Urban areas had a higher rate of total crashes per miles traveled, while rural areas had a higher fatal crash rate.
- Rural crashes were 2.8 times more likely to be fatal than urban crashes.
## Occupant Protection

Wearing a seat belt is one of the best ways to decrease injuries and deaths in motor vehicle crashes.

- Unrestrained crash occupants were 3.9 times more likely to be injured in a crash than restrained crash occupants.
- Also, unrestrained crash occupants were 14 times more likely to die in a crash than restrained injured occupants.

### Unrestrained Occupant Deaths by Year (Utah 2009-2018)

- 2018 had the lowest number of unrestrained occupant deaths over the last 10 years.

### Unrestrained Crash Occupants by County (Utah 2018)

- Urban counties had lower percent of unrestrained occupants in crashes compared to rural counties.

### Unrestrained Injured Crash Occupants by Age (Utah 2018)

- Occupants in rural crashes were 3.4 times more likely to be unrestrained than urban occupants.

### Unrestrained Injured Crash Occupants by Rural vs. Urban (Utah 2018)
**Occupant Protection**

**Restraint Use by Injury Severity (Utah 2018)**
- 99% of persons who survived a crash were restrained compared to about 65% of the persons killed.
- Occupants in heavy trucks and pickup trucks were the most likely to be unrestrained in a crash.

**Restraint Use by Vehicle Type (Utah 2018)**

**Child Safety Seat Recommendations:**
- Children should ride rear facing until at least two years of age and 30 pounds.
- Children should ride forward-facing with a harness until at least four years of age and 40 pounds, or longer if the car seat allows.
- Children who are at least four years of age and 40 pounds can ride in a booster seat. Use the booster seat until the seat belt fits correctly and until the child is 4’9”.
- Children under 13 years old should ride in the back seat.
- Never place a rear-facing child safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger side air bag.

**Seat Belt Recommendations:**
- Always use both the lap and shoulder belt. When worn properly, the shoulder belt should fit across the collar bone and the lap belt should fit low over the hips.
- Never place the shoulder strap under the arm or behind the back.
- Always buckle up to stay safe and set a good example.

**Safety Restraint Laws:**
- Utah law requires all motor vehicle occupants to wear a seat belt.
- Children age 7 years and under must ride in an approved child safety seat.

**Percent of Children Aged 1-8 Years in crashes Using Child safety Seats (Utah 2018)**
- The older the child, the less likely they were using a child safety seat.
- While 92% of 1-year-olds in a crash were in a child safety seat, only 78% of 4-year-olds, 67% of 5-year-olds, 55% of 6-year-olds, and 33% of 7-year-olds were in a child safety seat.
- The decrease in child safety seat use for children aged 4-8 years is concerning and indicates that children are moving to adult-sized seat belts too early.
In 2018, a total of 8,865 speed-related crashes occurred in Utah, which resulted in 4,203 injured persons and 69 deaths.

27% of fatal crashes were speed-related and resulted in 26% of all motor vehicle crash deaths.

Drivers aged 15-24 years had the highest percentage of total speed-related crashes.

Morgan, Salt Lake, and Wasatch counties (in that order) had the highest speed-related crash rates per miles traveled.

Note: A crash is considered speed-related when at least one of the drivers was exceeding the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions, as indicated by the police officer in the crash report under the driver contributing circumstances.
Speed-related crashes were more frequent during morning hours compared to all other crashes, particularly between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m.

- Speeding is one of the leading factors contributing to traffic crashes. Speeding is dangerous because it:
  - Magnifies drivers’ errors;
  - Extends the distance necessary to stop a vehicle;
  - Increases the distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts to a situation;
  - Reduces a driver’s ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the road;
  - Decreases the effectiveness of vehicle design features, such as seat belts;
  - Reduces the stability of the vehicle structure;
  - Increases the number of crashes;
  - Increases the severity of crashes. Speeding crashes were twice more likely to be fatal than other crashes.

Drivers need to remember that there is a reason for speed limits. Roadways are to be driven with caution and the speed limits are designed to protect everyone—drivers, passengers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

The posted speed limit is the law. Slow down and obey speed limits.

- Speed-related crashes were more frequent on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In general, weekdays also experienced higher overall crash frequencies.
Alcohol

- 1,915 alcohol-related driver crashes occurred in Utah, which resulted in 1,224 injured persons and 67 deaths. Out of the 67 deaths, 51 occurred in crashes with at least one drunk driver (BAC >= 0.08).
- 3.1% of the crashes in Utah involved an alcohol-related driver.

Alcohol-related crashes were 10.5 times more likely to be fatal than other crashes.

Percent of Total crashes with an Alcohol-Related Driver by Hour (Utah 2018)

Note: A non-fatal crash is considered alcohol-related when at least one driver tested positive for alcohol, or if the investigating officer suspected the driver used alcohol. A drunk driver fatal crash is a crash resulting in one or more deaths involving at least one driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter or above.

Alcohol-Related Driver Crashes by Day of Week (Utah 2018)

- Drivers aged 21 to 29 had the highest rates of alcohol-related crashes.
- 133 (7%) of the alcohol-related drivers in crashes were under the age of 21 years.
- While 3.1% of total crashes involved an alcohol-suspected driver, 15% of crashes occurring during the hours of 11 p.m. and 4 a.m. involved an alcohol-related driver.
- The highest percentage of alcohol-related driver crashes occurred on weekends (43%).

Rate of Alcohol-Related Drivers in Crashes per Licensed Driver (Utah 2018)
Alcohol-Related Driver Crashes (Utah 2009-2018)

- The number of alcohol-related driver crashes increased in 2018 after a continuous decrease from 2015 to 2017.

Deaths from Drunk Drivers (BAC >=0.08) (Utah 2009-2018)

- The number of deaths from drunk drivers (BAC >= 0.08) remained increased significantly in 2018 (51 deaths) in 2018 compared to 36 in 2016 and 2017.

Alcohol-Related Driver Crashes by County (Utah 2018)

- Salt Lake, Wasatch, Weber, Sanpete, and Summit counties (in that order) had the highest alcohol-related crash rates per miles traveled.
- Daggett County had the overall highest alcohol-related crash rates, but this was the result of 4 alcohol-related crashes and the lowest miles traveled.
- Beaver, San Juan, Millard, and Juab counties had the lowest rates of alcohol-related crashes (< 2 alcohol-related crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled).
Drugs

- 1,049 drug-related driver crashes occurred in Utah in 2018, which resulted in 782 injured persons and 94 deaths.
- 1.7% of the crashes in Utah involved a drug-related driver, and these crashes resulted in 36% of the deaths from motor vehicle crashes.

Drug-related crashes were 33 times more likely to be fatal than other crashes.

Drug presence does not necessarily imply impairment. For many drug types, drug presence can be detected long after any impairment that might affect driving has passed. Also, whereas the impairment effects for various concentration levels of alcohol is well understood, little evidence is available to link concentrations of other drug types to driver performance.

Drug-related crashes were the highest between the hours of 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

- Drivers aged 16 to 29 years had the highest rates of drug-related crashes.
- There were over twice as many male drivers in drug-related crashes compared to female drivers.

Note: A non-fatal crash is considered drug-related when at least one driver had a positive drug test, or if the investigating officer suspected that the driver used drugs. A drug-positive driver fatal crash is a crash resulting in one or more deaths involving at least one driver with a positive drug test.
Drugs

Drug-Related Driver Crashes by Year (Utah 2009-2018)

- The three largest number of drug-related driver crashes in the last 10 years have occurred in the last three years.

Drug-Related vs. Alcohol-Related Driver Crashes by Day of Week (Utah 2018)

- While the proportion of alcohol-related driver crashes was higher on weekends, drug-related crashes were more spread throughout the week.

Drug-Related Driver Crashes by County (Utah 2018)

- Weber, Rich, Salt Lake, Morgan, and Utah counties (in that order) had the highest drug-related crash rates per miles traveled.

- The high rates in Rich and Morgan counties are the result of 3 and 6 drug-related crashes in 2018, respectively, compared to 167 and 435 in Utah and Salt Lake Counties, respectively.
Distraction

- 5,772 distracted driving crashes occurred in Utah in 2018, which resulted in 3,123 injured persons and 18 deaths.
- 9.2% of all crashes in Utah involved a distracted driver, and over half of the distracted driving crashes (56%) were rear-end crashes.

Driving is a multitask job and demands the full attention of the driver.

Percent of Crashes Involving Distracted Drivers by Year (Utah 2018)

Distraction Driver Crash Rates per Licensed Driver by Age (Utah 2018)

- Younger drivers had the highest rates of driver distraction in crashes.

In 2007, a law was passed prohibiting handheld telephone use which could only be enforced if a moving traffic violation was committed.

In 2009, a law was passed prohibiting texting while operating a moving motor vehicle.

In 2011, texting was added to the distracted driving options on the police traffic crash report.

Crashes involving drivers on cell phones have increased year over year since 2010.
Distraction

Distraction Driving Crashes by Distraction Type (Utah 2018)

1. Cell Phone (19%)
2. Other Inside Distraction (12%)
3. Other External Distraction (11%)
4. Passengers (10%)
Other Distraction (37%)

Distraction Driving Crashes by Hour (Utah 2018)

- The highest number of distraction crashes by hour occurred between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

- Salt Lake, Utah, Weber, Cache, and Davis counties (in that order) had the highest distracted driver crash rates per miles traveled (>18 distracted-driver crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled.

Note: While driver distraction numbers are significant, they may not state the true size of the problem, since the identification of distraction and its role in the crash by law enforcement can be very difficult.
Drowsy Driving

- 1,330 motor vehicle crashes in Utah (2.1% of all crashes) involved a drowsy driver.
- Fatalities from drowsy driver crashes have accounted for 5.4% of all fatalities over the last 10 years.

Fatalities from drowsy driver crashes have remained at relatively steady values in the last ten years.

Drowsy Driver Deaths by Year (Utah 2009-2018)

Drowsy driver crashes were 3.2 times more likely to be fatal than other crashes.

Drowsy Driver Crashes by Year (Utah 2009-2018)

- Younger drivers (aged 24 and under) had the highest percent of crashes with a drowsy driver.

Age of Drowsy Drivers in Crashes (Utah 2018)

Gender of Drowsy Drivers in Crashes (Utah 2018)

- Male drivers in crashes were 1.9 times more likely to be driving drowsy than female drivers in crashes.
Drowsy Driving

Percent of Total Crashes with a Drowsy Driver by Hour (Utah 2018)

- While 2.1% of total crashes involved a drowsy driver, 8.7% of crashes occurring between midnight and 6 a.m. involved a drowsy driver.

Drowsy Driver Crashes by Month (Utah 2018)

- May, July, and August had the highest proportion of drowsy crashes with respect to all crashes.

Drowsy Driver Crashes by County (Utah 2018)

- Garfield, Wasatch, Millard, and Daggett counties (in that order) had the highest drowsy driver crash rates per miles traveled.

Before driving:
- Get adequate sleep - most adults need 7-9 hours to maintain proper alertness during the day.
- Schedule proper breaks - about every 100 miles or 2 hours during long trips.
- Arrange for a travel companion someone to talk with and share driving.
- Avoid alcohol and sedating medications - check your labels or ask your doctor.
Teenage Drivers (15-19 Years)

- In 2018, teenage drivers were involved in 13,205 motor vehicle crashes in Utah, representing 21% of all crashes.
- Teenage drivers accounted for 8.9% of the licensed drivers in Utah, yet they represented 13% of all drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes.

Teenage drivers were 1.6 times more likely to be in a crash than drivers of other ages.

- Out of all age groups, drivers aged 17 and 18 years had the highest total crash rate per licensed driver.
- After normalizing by the number of registered teen drivers, male and female teen drivers were equally likely to be involved in a crash.

Leading Contributing Factors of Teenage Driver Crashes (Utah 2017)

1. Followed too Closely (25%)
2. Failed to Yield the Right of Way (21%)
3. Speed too Fast for Conditions (11%)
4. Failed to Keep in Proper Lane (10%)
5. Improper Turn (4%)

9% of teen driver crashes were also associated with distracted driving. The most common distraction was cell phone use and passengers.
Teenage Drivers (15-19 Years)

Teenage Driver Crash Trends (Utah 2009-2018)

- Teenage driver crash rates per licensed driver show a flat trend in the last five years.

Teenage Driver Crashes by Hour (Utah 2018)

- Teenage-driver crashes had the highest frequencies during after-school hours, between 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Law in Utah

GDL allows beginning drivers the chance to build experience before they are exposed to more high-risk situations, such as carrying teen passengers and nighttime driving. Easing young drivers onto the roadways can reduce the number of traffic crashes involving young drivers.

Learner Permit
A person must be at least 15 years old to apply for a learner permit. Anyone who is under 18 years of age is required to hold a learner permit for six months before applying for a license.

Supervised Driving
Everyone under 18 years of age applying for a license must complete 40 hours of driving, of which at least 10 hours must be during night hours. This allows beginning drivers to practice and gain supervised experience.

Driver License
A person must be at least 16 years of age to get a driver license. Everyone who has never been licensed to drive a motor vehicle must complete an approved driver education course.

Night-time Restrictions
Anyone under the age of 17 years may not drive from midnight to 5:00 a.m. except in a limited number of situations. The majority of fatal teen crashes take place at night.

Passenger Restrictions
For the first six months of licensure, teen drivers can not drive with any passenger who is not an immediate family member with a few exceptions. Teen drivers are more likely to crash with passengers in the car, especially teen passengers. The more passengers, the greater the risk.

Seat Belt Restrictions
Utah law requires all motor vehicle occupants to wear a seat belt.
Older Drivers (Age 65+)

- Older drivers were involved in 8,437 motor vehicle crashes (14% of all crashes), which resulted in 4,023 injuries and 51 deaths.
- Senior drivers have the lowest crash rates of any drivers and represented 7% of drivers in crashes, but senior driver crashes resulted in 20% of the total deaths.

Even though crash rates per licensed driver ages 65 and above are the lowest of all age groups, their crash frequencies have increased at a faster rate.

Crash Rates per Licensed Driver by Age (Utah 2018)

- The older the driver, the less likely they were in a crash per licensed driver.

Leading Contributing Factors of Older Driver Crashes Compared to All Drivers (Utah 2018)

Drivers Age Less than 65 Years in Crashes
1. Followed Too Closely (24%)
2. Failed to Yield the Right of Way (17%)
3. Too Fast for Conditions (13%)
4. Failed to Keep in Proper Lane (12%)
5. Improper Lane Change (4%)

Drivers Age 65+ Years in Crashes
1. Failed to Yield the Right of Way (28%)
2. Followed Too Closely (15%)
3. Failed to Keep in Proper Lane (11%)
4. Improper Lane Change (7%)
5. Improper Turn (7%)

- The leading contributing factor for older drivers was “Failing to Yield the Right of Way”, whereas for younger drivers it was “Following too Closely”.
- “Too Fast for Conditions” was not in the top 5 contributing factors for older drivers, but “Improper Turn” was.
Older Drivers (Age 65+)

Older Driver Crashes by Year (Utah 2009-2018)

- Older driver crashes per year have increased steadily in the last 7 years, for a total increase of 37% during that period. As a reference, there has been an increase of 26% in the total number of crashes during the same time period.
- The number of older driver crashes per 1,000 drivers in the same age group is at similar levels as in 2013. This indicates smaller differences between registered older drivers compared to other age groups.

Older Driver Crash Deaths by Year (Utah 2009-2018)

- The total number of older driver crash deaths in 2018 confirms a steady trend over the last 6 years.

Older Driver Crashes by County (Utah 2018)

- Washington, Salt Lake, and Weber counties (in that order) had the highest older driver crash rates per miles traveled.

Older Drivers in Crashes

- People age 65+ were 3 times more likely to be killed in a crash than younger people.
Motorcycles

- There were 1,037 motorcycle crashes in Utah, resulting in 966 injured motorcyclists and 47 motorcyclist deaths.
- Motorcyclists accounted for less than 1% of persons in crashes and 18% of deaths.

Motorcycle crashes were 13 times more likely to result in a death than other crashes.

Motorcyclist Deaths (2009-2018)

- Motorcycle deaths have been increasing in the last 10 years.
- However, motorcycle crash rates per registered motorcycles follow a neutral or downward trend in the last eight years.

Helmet Use of Motorcyclists in Crashes (Utah 2018)

- Over one third of motorcyclists in crashes did not wear a helmet.
- Motorcyclists who did not wear a helmet were 1.6 times more likely to have fatal injuries when involved in a crash compared to those who did wear a helmet.

Note: Utah law requires anyone under the age of 18 years riding a motorcycle to wear a helmet.
Motorcycles

Number of Vehicles in Motorcycle-related Crashes (Utah 2018)

Age of Motorcycle Drivers in All Crashes (Utah 2018)

* Including motorcycles

- 41% of crashes involving motorcycles did not include a collision with other vehicle, and 55% included only one more motor-vehicle.

Leading Contributing Factors of Motor-Vehicle (Non-motorcycle) Drivers in Motorcycle Crashes (Utah 2018)

1. Failed to Yield the Right of Way (46%)
2. Followed too closely (10%)
3. Improper Turn (9%)
4. Improper lane change (7%)

* 41% of motor-vehicle (non-motorcycle) drivers had no contributing factor in the crash

Leading Contributing Factors of Motorcycle Drivers in Motorcycle Crashes (Utah 2018)

1. Followed Too Closely (16%)
2. Failed to keep in proper lane (14%)
3. Too Fast for Conditions (14%)
4. Exceeded Posted Speed Limit (8%)

* 45% of motorcycle drivers had no contributing factor in the crash

Manner of Collision of Motorcycle-Related Crashes with Two or More Vehicles (Utah 2018)

1. Angle (41%)
2. Front to Rear (31%)
3. Sideswipe Same Direction (11%)

The leading contributing factor of drivers in collisions with motorcycles was failing to yield the right of way. The most common manner of collision was angle (a turning maneuver).
Pedestrians

- In 2018, 830 motor vehicle crashes involved pedestrians; 811 people were injured in those crashes and 38 were killed (37 pedestrians).
- The 37 pedestrian fatalities in 2018 are lower than those in the previous year (43 pedestrian fatalities), but does not yet indicate a clear downward trend when analyzing the past 5 years.

Pedestrians represented about 0.6% of persons in crashes but 14% of deaths.

55% of drivers in pedestrian-motor-vehicle crashes were under 40 years old.

45% of the pedestrians in crashes were under 25 years old.

**Leading Contributing Factors of Drivers in Pedestrian Crashes (Utah 2018)**

1. Failed to Yield the Right of Way (48%)
2. Hit and Run (13%)
3. Failed to Keep in Proper Lane (5%)
4. Too Fast for Conditions (4%)
* Other (10%)

**Leading Contributing Factors of Pedestrians in Pedestrian Crashes (Utah 2018)**

1. Improper Crossing (34%)
2. Darting (18%)
3. Not Visible (11%)
4. In Roadway Improperly (9%)
* 51% of pedestrians had no contributing factor in the crash.

Driver distraction was a factor in 7% of pedestrian-related crashes.
Pedestrians

Pedestrian-Motor Vehicle Crashes by Hour (Utah 2018)

- Pedestrian-motor vehicle crashes occurred most often between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. and between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Injury Severity of Pedestrians in Crashes (Utah 2018)

- The rate of pedestrians involved in motor vehicle crashes is at lower levels than in the last 8 years, except for 2017

Motor Vehicle* Action Prior to Crash (Utah 2018)

1. Straight Ahead (50%)
2. Turning Right (20%)
3. Turning Left (19%)
4. Backing (3%)
5. Leaving the Traffic Lane (3%)

* Only actions of vehicle number 1

Location of Pedestrians in Crashes (Utah 2018)

1. Marked Crosswalk at Intersection (43%)
2. In Roadway (no crosswalk or intersection) (22%)
3. Unmarked Crosswalk at Intersection (9%)
4. Sidewalk (5%)
5. Midblock Crosswalk (5%)

Pedestrian Crash Rates per Population (Utah 2009-2018)
Bicyclists

- In 2018, 537 crashes involved bicyclists in Utah, resulting in 492 bicyclists injured and 3 bicyclist deaths.

The leading vehicle maneuver and driving contributing factor for bicycle-related crashes was a right turn and a driver not yielding the right of way, respectively.

Bicyclists in Motor-Vehicle Crashes (Utah 2018)

- The number of bicyclists in motor-vehicle crashes in Utah has a generally decreasing trend in the last six years.

Bicycle-Motor Vehicle Crashes by Hour (Utah 2018)

- Overall, the distribution of bicycle-related crashes by hour of the day followed a distribution similar to that of all crashes.
- However, higher proportion of bicycle crashes occurred in the morning peak (between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m.), from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., and from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Leading Contributing Factors of Drivers in Bicycle Crashes (Utah 2018)

1. Failed to Yield the Right of Way (60%)
2. Hit and Run (6.7%)
3. Improper Turn (5.2%)
4. Disregard Traffic Signals (3.1%)

Driver distraction was a factor in 4% of bicycle-related crashes.
**Bicyclists**

**Age of Drivers in Bicycle-Motor Vehicle Crashes (Utah 2018)**

- 24% of the drivers in bicycle-related crashes were under 25 years of age. This age group represents 19% of all registered drivers.

**Age of Bicyclists in Bicycle-Motor Vehicle Crashes (Utah 2018)**

- Over 48% of the bicyclists in crashes were under the age of 30, and 17% were under the age of 15.

**Bicyclist Action Prior to Crash (Utah 2018)**

1. Entering or Crossing Road (30%)
2. Cycling on Sidewalk (28%)
3. Cycling Along Roadway with Traffic (27%)
4. Cycling Along Roadway against Traffic (11%)
5. Other (1%)

**Motor-Vehicle Driver Action Prior to Crash (Utah 2018)**

1. Turning Right (38%)
2. Straight Ahead (36%)
3. Turning Left (17%)
4. Entering Traffic Lane (1.4%)

**Bicycle-Motor Vehicle Crashes by Day of Week (Utah 2018)**

- The largest proportion of bicycle-related crashes occurred on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Sundays had the lowest proportions of crashes.

- The largest proportion of bicycle-related crashes occurred on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Sundays had the lowest proportions of crashes.