Bicycling: Quick Facts from the American Time Use Survey

On a typical day, how many U.S. residents ride a bicycle?

	number of bikers ('000)	% of this population group
Total Population Age 15+	2,678	1.1% (std.error=0.04)
Males	1,886	1.6 (0.06)
Females	792	0.7 (0.05)
Age 15-20	503	2.0 (0.1)
Age 21-39	962	1.3 (0.08)
Age 40-59	865	1.0 (0.06)
Age 60+	348	0.7 (0.06)
White	2,295	1.2 (0.05)
Black	203	0.7 (0.09)
Hispanic	297	0.9 (0.08)
non-Hispanic	2,381	1.2 (0.05)

Percent of population biking on a typical day, by day of week, season, and region

Monday-Friday	1.1% (se =0.05)	March-May	1.2%
Saturday	1.1% (0.06)	June-August	1.7%
Sunday	1.2% (0.07)	Sept.-Nov.	1.1%
		Dec.-Feb.	0.6%

Northeast	1.0% (s.e.=0.09)
Midwest	1.1% (0.08)
South	0.8% (0.05)
West	1.7% (0.11)

Purpose of Bicycle Riding (% distribution)

    All Days of Week

recreation	35%	(se=1.7)
commuting	23%	(1.7)
errands	22%	(1.7)
all other	20%	(1.3)
All bike rides	100%	

    Saturdays/Sundays

recreation	50%	(2.6)
commuting	8%	(1.5)
errands	20%	(2.0)
all other	22%	(2.0)
All bike rides	100%	

Time of Day That Bike Trips Commence (% distribution)

before 9:00am	18%	(se=1.0)
9:00am to 11:59am	18%	(1.1)
12:00 noon to 2:59pm	19%	(1.0)
3:00pm to 5:59pm	23%	(1.3)
6:00pm and after	22%	(1.3)
All Trips	100%	

Length of Bike Rides

mean	34 minutes	(se=1.4)
median	15 minutes	
25th percentile	10 minutes	
75th percentile	40 minutes	

Of those biking, how many ride multiple times in a day?

one ride only	49%
two rides	35%
three rides	6%
four+ rides	10%

Location Immediately Before and After a Bike Trip (% of all bike trips)

Before		home	workplace	After other's home	shop/ restaurant	car/other transport	other or missing	Row Total
home		3	7	5	6	1	10	31
workplace		7	0	0	1	1	3	11
others' home		5	0	1	1	0	2	8
shop/restaurant		6	1	1	1	0	3	13
car or other transport		1	1	0	0	1	1	5
other or missing		9	4	2	3	2	10	31
ColumnTotal		32	12	9	13	5	28	100%
note: due to rounding, figures do not always total								

Bicycling and Health

Bikers are younger than non-bikers, on average. But even controlling for age, bikers in the largest adult age groups report better health than non-bikers.

Question: *"How healthy are you?"*

	bikers	non-bikers
All adults (age15+)		
excellent or very good	70% (se=2.8)	52% (0.3)
good, fair, or poor	30% (2.8)	48% (0.3)
Age 21-39		
excellent or very good	72% (se=5.0)	58% (0.7)
good, fair, or poor	28% (5.0)	42% (0.7)
Age 40-59		
excellent or very good	67% (se=5.6)	49% (0.6)
good, fair, or poor	33% (5.6)	51% (0.6)

Bikers also are less often overweight than are non-bikers. The tabulations below define overweight as having a Body Mass Index above 25.0.

	bikers	non-bikers
Percentage of group who are overweight		
All adults (age15+)	48% (3.2)	60% (0.4)
Age 21-39	55% (5.4)	58% (0.7)
Age 40-59	49% (5.3)	68% (0.5)

Technical Notes:

All estimates are the author's tabulations of the public use data files from the American Time Use Survey for 2003-2013. The ATUS is a nationally representative sample of the population age 15 and older. The statistics refer to a typical day during that 11 year period. The 148,345 Survey respondents during the 11 years include 1,565 who reported riding a bicycle on the survey day. These "bikers" reported a total of 2,752 bike activities during the survey day.

Standard errors for some of the estimates are presented in the tables, in parentheses. These standard errors were generated using the replicate weights provided with the ATUS data files. Because the ATUS is a complex sample design, standard errors and confidence intervals based on the assumption of simple random sampling will be incorrect (and for this sample generally too low). The 95% confidence intervals for the estimates are approximately +/- two standard errors.

The health and "overweight" tabulations are based on special questions asked in only some years of the ATUS. The health question is based on responses in 2010, 2012, and 2013. The "overweight" estimates are based on height, weight, and Body Mass Index responses in 2006, 2007, and 2008. Overweight is defined as a BMI above 25.0, the standard used in much health research.

More information on the American Time Use Survey is available at www.bls.gov/tus