



Speed

Key issues

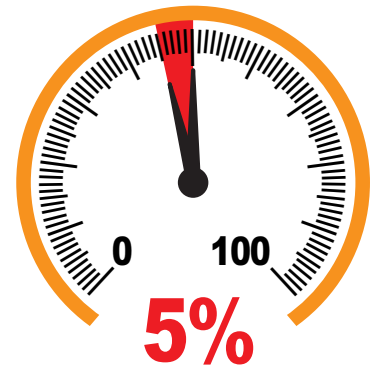
- Excessive speed (driving above the speed limit) and inappropriate speed (driving too fast for the road or traffic conditions, but within the speed limit) are major causes of traffic crashes that result in death and serious injury.¹
- The faster a vehicle is traveling the greater the impact in a crash. As a result, speed affects not only the risk of being involved in a crash, but also the severity of injuries resulting from a crash.²
- A 5% reduction in average speed is estimated to reduce the number of fatal crashes by as much as 30%.³
- Speed limits that are too high for the type of road, roadside conditions and the volume and type of road users contribute to crashes, injury and death.
- Pedestrians and cyclists are particularly vulnerable to injury and death as a result of excessive vehicle speeds.⁴

Key Messages

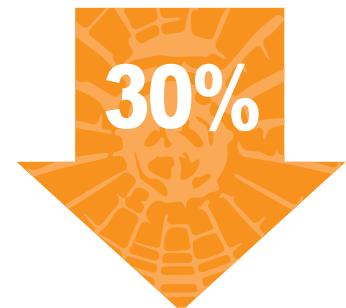
- Setting and enforcing speed limits is one of the most effective measures in reducing road traffic injuries.⁵
- Excessive speed and inappropriate speed are dangerous and are major causes of traffic crashes resulting in death and serious injury.
- Speed limits should be appropriate for the type of road, roadside conditions and the volume and type of road users. Particular attention should be paid to the speed limits on urban roads and roads with high concentrations of pedestrians and cyclists, such as around schools or residential areas.⁶
- Where there are many pedestrians and/or cyclists using a road, measures need to be taken to reduce vehicle speeds in order to improve safety for these vulnerable road users.
- Targeted social marketing campaigns, when conducted together with effective law enforcement, can help to reduce excessive speeding.
- One of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets (3.6) is to halve the global number of deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes by 2020. Setting and enforcing speed limits is essential to achieve this target.

Components of Strong Speed Policies

- Speed limits need to be set at levels that take account of the type of road, roadside conditions and the volume and type of road users. They can be variable to adapt for different times and traffic density.



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- Urban speed limits should be set at 50 km/h or less. Where motorized traffic mixes with pedestrians, cyclists, and moped riders, the speed limit must be under 30 km/h. This is due to the vulnerability of these road users at increasing speed: an adult pedestrian has less than a 20% chance of dying if struck by a car at less than 50 km/h but almost a 60% risk of dying if hit at 80km/h.⁷
- Setting and enforcing national speed limits is an important step in reducing speed.
- Road design regulations and guidelines should allow the use of a wide range of engineering treatments to effectively manage speed. These include treatments designed to:
 - *slow vehicles down, such as speed humps and raised platforms at pedestrian crossings*
 - *allow for separation of vulnerable road users, such as footpaths for pedestrians or bicycle lanes for cyclists.*
- Penalties for excessive speed need to be set at levels that are serious enough to deter people from breaking the law and must be applied consistently and fairly.

Components Required for Effective Enforcement

- Widespread, consistent and highly visible law enforcement by police is required to send a message to drivers that speeding is illegal and will not be tolerated.
- The public needs to be educated to understand the crash risks associated with speeding, and they should be informed that traffic police are targeting speeding drivers. Drivers need to understand that they can be caught “anywhere and anytime” if they speed.⁸
- The use of fixed and mobile speed cameras and other hand-held or car-mounted speed detection devices (such as laser or radar) allow for effective speed enforcement. The use of covert mobile speed cameras has been shown to be highly effective as part of an overall enforcement program.⁹
- Speed enforcement activities should be targeted at specific locations and times when drivers are likely to be speeding. Knowing where and when to target speeding relies on good intelligence and ensures that the use of police resources is maximized.
- Speed enforcement activities need to be repeated often and conducted in a way that provides a visible deterrence to speeding.
- It is important that data on speeding is collected and analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of policies and programs, and for planning purposes.

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References

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