

Table 5.56

Average maximum length of felony sentences imposed by State courts

By offense, United States, 1994

(In months)

Most serious conviction offense	Maximum sentence length for felons sentenced to:			
	Total	Incarceration Prison	Jail	Straight probation
Average sentence				
All offenses	49	71	6	40
Violent offenses	93	118	6	45
Murder ^a	262	269	7	59
Rape	133	158	7	60
Robbery	104	116	9	51
Aggravated assault	54	79	6	42
Other violent ^b	47	70	6	43
Property offenses	39	57	6	42
Burglary	52	69	7	47
Larceny ^c	29	45	6	40
Fraud ^d	32	51	5	41
Drug offenses	40	61	6	38
Possession	28	50	4	37
Trafficking	48	66	7	40
Weapons offenses	31	47	5	32
Other offenses ^e	26	41	5	36
Median sentence				
All offenses	24	48	4	36
Violent offenses	60	72	6	36
Murder ^a	300	300	6	60
Rape	84	120	6	48
Robbery	72	84	9	48
Aggravated assault	36	54	4	36
Other violent ^b	24	48	5	36
Property offenses	24	42	4	36
Burglary	36	49	6	36
Larceny ^c	16	36	4	36
Fraud ^d	23	36	3	36
Drug offenses	24	48	4	30
Possession	12	36	3	24
Trafficking	36	48	6	36
Weapons offenses	18	36	4	24
Other offenses ^e	12	30	3	30

Note: See Notes, tables 5.49 and 5.53. The median sentence is the sentence length that marks the point below which and above which 50% of all sentence lengths fall. Averages exclude sentences to death or to life in prison. Sentence length data were available for 834,124 cases sentenced to incarceration or probation. For survey sampling procedures and definitions of terms, see Appendix 14.

^aIncludes nonnegligent manslaughter.

^bIncludes offenses such as negligent manslaughter, sexual assault, and kidnaping.

^cIncludes motor vehicle theft.

^dIncludes forgery and embezzlement.

^eComposed of nonviolent offenses such as receiving stolen property and vandalism.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Felony Sentences in State Courts, 1994*, Bulletin NCJ-163391 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, January 1997), p. 3, Table 3.