

Table 5.57

Average maximum length of felony sentences imposed by State and Federal courts

By offense, United States, 1994

(In months)

Most serious conviction offense	Average maximum sentence length for felons sentenced to:			
	Incarceration			Straight probation
	Total	Prison	Jail	
Violent offenses				
Murder/manslaughter^a				
State and Federal	260	267	7	58
State	262	269	7	59
Federal	148	153	8	41
Rape				
State and Federal	132	157	7	60
State	133	158	7	60
Federal	69	79	9	48
Robbery				
State and Federal	104	115	9	51
State	104	116	9	51
Federal	100	102	8	44
Aggravated assault				
State and Federal	54	79	6	42
State	54	79	6	42
Federal	49	59	6	39
Other violent^b				
State and Federal	47	70	6	43
State	47	70	6	43
Federal	93	110	8	39
Property offenses				
Burglary				
State and Federal	52	69	7	47
State	52	69	7	47
Federal	54	60	9	43
Larceny^c				
State and Federal	29	45	6	40
State	29	45	6	40
Federal	28	43	7	40
Motor vehicle theft				
State and Federal	29	50	5	41
State	29	50	5	41
Federal	33	43	8	39
Other theft				
State and Federal	29	44	6	40
State	29	44	6	40
Federal	26	43	7	40
Fraud/forgery^d				
State and Federal	30	50	5	41
State	32	51	5	41
Federal	20	35	7	39
Fraud^d				
State and Federal	28	50	5	40
State	29	53	4	40
Federal	21	35	7	39
Forgery				
State and Federal	33	50	6	42
State	33	50	6	42
Federal	18	32	7	39
Drug offenses				
Possession				
State and Federal	28	50	4	37
State	28	50	4	37
Federal	44	66	7	32
Trafficking				
State and Federal	52	70	7	40
State	48	66	7	40
Federal	84	92	8	50

Note: See Notes, tables 5.50 and 5.54. For persons receiving a combination of sentences, the sentence designation came from the most severe penalty imposed -- prison being the most severe, followed by jail, then probation. Averages exclude sentences to death or to life in prison. For methodology used to collect the Federal data, see Appendix 13. For methodology used to collect the State data and definitions of offenses used for these tables, see Appendix 14.

^aDoes not include negligent manslaughter.

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

^cIncludes motor vehicle theft.

^dIncludes embezzlement.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Felony Sentences in the United States, 1994*, Bulletin NCJ-165149 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, July 1997), p. 8. Table adapted by SOURCEBOOK staff.