

# Sitting & fuming: traffic congestion statistics

Highway Robbery - The real cost of traffic jams

The state of the interstate

If placed end-to-end, the public U.S. roadways would stretch 4 million miles – long enough to circle the Earth 160 times.

The U.S. collectively drives about 3 trillion miles annually – a spaceship traveling at the speed of light would take about 6 months to cover the same distance.

## Congestion: driving fast in the slow lane

Top 5 most congested urban areas in the U.S.

Average hours of annual delay per commuter

- Washington D.C. – 74
- Chicago – 71
- Los Angeles, CA – 64
- Houston, TX – 57
- New York, NY – 54

## Travel tip

When planning a road trip, try to avoid urban areas during peak travel times. You may save hours by driving a few miles out of your way to avoid a big city.

## Causes of road congestion

Bottlenecks – 40%

Traffic incidents – 25%

Bad weather – 15%

Work zones – 10%

Poor traffic signal timing – 5%

Special events/other – 5%

## Travel tip

Traffic gets progressively worse from Monday to Friday. Saturdays and Sundays typically have less delay than any weekday, so plan trips during the weekend when possible.

## Travel tip

Congestion usually takes a dip during the hotter months, so start planning that summer road trip.

## The bottom line: congestion costs money

Traffic jams don't just make you late, they cost you money. According to the Texas Transportation Institute, each hour stuck in traffic costs about \$21 in wasted time and fuel. Here's a look at the real cost of traffic congestion:

## Country-wide cost of congestion

1.9 billion gallons of fuel wasted due to road congestion – more than five days' worth of the total daily fuel consumption in the United State.

The average yearly cost to each driver is \$713 – more than a week's wages for the average American.

The average urban commuter is stuck in traffic for 34 hours every year. That's longer than it would take to drive from Bangor, Maine, to Key West, Florida.

## Travel tip

Peak travel time and rush hour mean the same thing: try to stay off of major highways or consider taking public transportation from 7 a.m. – 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. during the week to avoid 60 percent of road congestion.

## Sources:

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