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# 15 Dog Bite Statistics in 2024: Breeds, Incidences & Deaths



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📅 Last Updated on August 22, 2024 by [Dogster Team](#)

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You might think your beloved pup would never, ever bite someone, but the truth is, they could. There are many more dog bite attacks each year in the United States than one would think, and most of those receiving dog bites are children. Some of these attacks result in only minor injuries, but unfortunately, many others result in severe injuries and, occasionally, even death. That's why it's so vital that you're aware of the statistics surrounding dog bites.

By being aware, you're better informed and have a better chance of keeping your dog from biting anyone. Here's a look at 15 dog bite statistics you should know, from how many people in the United States are bitten annually to what the aftermath of a dog bite attack can look like.



## The 15 Dog Bite Statistics

1. In the United States, canines bite approximately 4.5 million people a year.
2. Roughly 50% of those 4.5 million people are children.
3. Most dog bites (70%) come from males who aren't neutered.
4. In 2022, over 5,300 USPS employees delivering mail were attacked by canines.
5. Dog pack attacks increased in 2023, accounting for 29% of all deadly dog bite attacks.
6. Around 20% of all dog bites need medical attention.
7. Approximately 50% of the dog bites adults receive are to the wrists and hands.
8. In 2022, 18,917 people received dog bites severe enough to require reconstructive surgery.
9. Between 2010 and 2023, 478 deadly canine bites were recorded.
10. The average number of fatal dog bites in the United States each year is 30 to 50.
11. There were 58 deaths from dog bites in 2023.

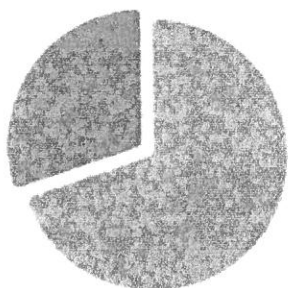
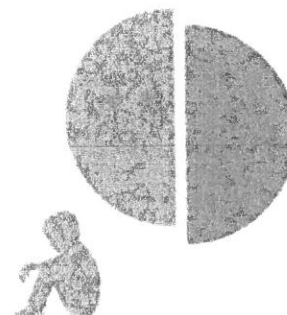
12. From 2014 to 2023, the average cost of dog bite claims has **increased by 82.5%**.
13. Dog bite claims saw a slight **decrease (2.2%)** from 2021.
14. In 2022, insurance companies paid a **total of \$1.136 billion** to settle dog bite claims.
15. The average amount paid in 2023 for dog bite claims was **\$58,545**.

# DOG BITE STATISTICS



In the United States, canines bite approximately **4.5 million people a year.**

Roughly 50% of those **4.5 million** people are children.



Most dog bites (**70%**) come from males who aren't neutered.

In 2022, over **5,300 USPS employees** delivering mail



were attacked by canines.



**Around 20%** of all dog bites need medical attention.



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## General Dog Bite Statistics

**1. In the United States, canines bite approximately 4.5 million people a year.**

(AVMA 1)

You may not believe your beloved dog would ever bite anyone, but canines bite around 4.5 million people each year in the United States alone! Plus, dog bites are often underreported, so this number may be even higher. Canines of any size and breed can be responsible for biting someone, and these bites range from minor to severe.



Image Credit: Dyrefotografi, Shutterstock

## **2. Roughly 50% of those 4.5 million people are children.**

(AVMA 2)

This is an upsetting statistic. It becomes even more upsetting because these children tend to be 12 years old or younger. Children are also more likely to be severely injured by dog bites, as dogs tend to bite them in the head and neck area. Boys tend to be bitten more often than girls.

## **3. Most dog bites (70%) come from males who aren't neutered.**

(ASPCA PRO)

Here's one more reason to ensure you get your dog fixed! Male dogs who aren't neutered bite people 2.6 times more often than dogs who are fixed. In fact, unneutered male dogs comprise 70–76% of dog bite incidents.



Image Credit: Bonsales, Shutterstock

#### **4. In 2022, over 5,300 USPS employees delivering mail were attacked by canines.**

(USPS)

Postal workers who deliver mail in the United States receive training on preventing dog attacks, but 5,300 were still attacked in 2022. However, this was down from 2020, when almost 6,000 USPS workers were attacked. Dogs not properly restrained when the mail carrier arrives put these carriers at risk of dog bites that often necessitate emergency treatment.

## 5. Dog pack attacks increased in 2023, accounting for 29% of all deadly dog bite attacks.

(DogsBite.org 1)

While there are plenty of single dog bite attacks, in 2023, dog bite pack attacks rose 93% from 2019. These attacks made up 29% of deadly dog bite attacks, while off-property attacks made up 43%. That 43% was a 65% increase from 2019.



## The Aftermath of Dog Bites

### 6. Around 20% of all dog bites need medical attention.

(Stovall)

Out of the 4.5 million people who are bitten by dogs in the United States each year, 20% of those end up needing medical treatment for their wounds. Some dog bites only require cleaning and a bandage, while others can result in surgery or worse. Kids are more likely than adults to need serious medical intervention.





Image Credit: Fercast, Shutterstock

## 7. Approximately 50% of the dog bites adults receive are to the wrists and hands.

(BMJ)

While kids tend to be bitten more in the head and neck area (likely due to their height), adults are mostly bitten on the wrists or hands. Why are these the areas where dogs bite adults? In some cases, it's because someone was bitten as they tried to pet a dog, but in other cases, it could be due to a person holding up their arms and hands to protect themselves from attack.

## **8. In 2022, 18,917 people received dog bites severe enough to require reconstructive surgery.**

(ASPS)

Even if a dog bite isn't deadly, it can be incredibly serious. Just ask the 18,917 people who had to have reconstructive surgery in 2022 after being bitten by dogs. That may be a small percentage of the 4.5 million people bitten yearly in the United States, but the number is still extremely large.

## **9. Between 2010 and 2023, 478 deadly canine bites were recorded.**

(Fuicelle & Lee)

Of those 478 dog bites, 196 came from Pit Bulls, while 49 came from Pit Bull mixes, for a total of 60% of dogs with Pit Bull bloodline. Seven percent of the dogs had Rottweilers, and 4% had German Shepherds.



Image Credit: Piotr Wawrzyniuk, Shutterstock

## 10. The average number of fatal dog bites in the United States each year is 30 to 50.

(NCBI)

While most dog bites won't be deadly, on average, 30 to 50 people in the United States die from them each year. It may not be a significant percentage of all dog bites, but it's still too many people. Still, for most people who are bitten by canines, the prognosis won't be fatal.

## 11. There were 58 deaths from dog bites in 2023.

(DogsBite.org 1)

There were 58 reported fatalities resulting from dog bites in 2023. Of the canines responsible for these deaths, 64% had their breed identified by a photo. 12% of these canines went unidentified, though, with no breed information available.



## Insurance and Dog Bites

**12. From 2014 to 2023, the average cost of dog bite claims has increased by 82.5%.**

(Ill Spotlight)

When it comes to insurance claims arising from dog bites, the average cost per claim in the United States increased 82.5% between 2014 and 2023. The reason for such a significant rise? The cost has gone up because of higher medical costs and larger judgments and settlements for victims.



Image Credit: Bonsales, Shutterstock

### **13. Dog bite claims saw a slight decrease (2.2%) from 2021.**

(III)

2022 saw a minute decrease in dog bite claims. While there were 17,989 bite claims in 2021, there were only 17,597 in 2022. Most likely, this decrease came about because of increased efforts to educate dog owners about dog bites and how to prevent them.

### **14. In 2022, insurance companies paid a total of \$1.136 billion to settle dog bite claims.**

(III)

Though the number of claims slightly decreased, the amount insurance companies paid out for dog bite claims rose by 28%. All in all, insurance companies shelled out \$1.136 billion to settle dog bite claims. That amount could increase even more in the future.

## 15. The average amount paid in 2023 for dog bite claims was \$58,545.

(III Spotlight)

Although the cost per claim has risen drastically in the past decade, there was a decrease in the cost between 2022 and 2023. While the average cost per in 2022 was \$64,555, this cost was only \$58,545 in 2023. This is a 9.3% decrease!



Image Credit: Den Rozhnovsky, Shutterstock



# Frequently Asked Questions About Dog Bites

## How many people get rabies from dogs each year?

99% of all rabies cases come from canines, and about 59,000 people a year die from rabies. Most of these cases are in Asia and Africa; there are relatively [few cases of rabies in the United States](#). (CDC)

## What is the one-bite rule?

A total of 16 states have what is known as the “one-bite rule”. But what exactly does that mean? This rule says that dog owners are only responsible for injuries their dogs cause if they are aware that the canine has aggressive tendencies before the bite occurs. As such, this rule is sometimes also known as the “one-free-bite rule.” (LawInfo)

## Are some dog breeds more likely to attack strangers than other breeds?

Yes. In fact, [Pit Bull terriers](#) are the most likely dog breed to attack someone they don’t know. This breed is 31% more likely to attack a stranger and 48% more likely to attack without provocation. Attacks from Pit Bull terriers are also more likely to result in a hospital visit or death. (NCBI)

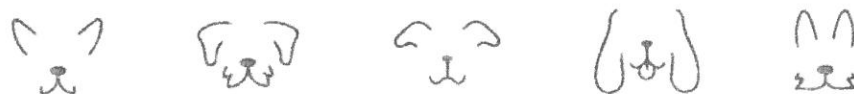
## Which states have the most fatal dog bite attacks?

In a study that looked at 16 years of fatal dog bite attacks, it was found that the top five states to have these were California, Texas, Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina. California had a total of 63 fatal dog bite attacks, while North Carolina had a total of 25.

(DogBites.org 2)

## What makes a dog more likely to bite people?

Though Pit Bulls are responsible for a large majority of dog bite attacks, breed itself isn't considered an indicator of whether a dog will bite someone or not. While the dog breed can factor in, the more relevant factors include the owner's behavior, how well the dog is trained, and whether the dog is neutered. As such, breed-specific legislation doesn't necessarily prevent dog bite attacks. (AVMA)



## Conclusion

Dog bite attacks are a serious matter that, unfortunately, harm several millions of people each year. While some of the dog bites received are minor, plenty are not and require hospitalization. Some even result in death. The best way to prevent your pet from becoming a dog who has bitten someone is to ensure they have been properly trained and socialized.

### See also:

- Are Pig Ears Good for Dogs? Vet-Verified Facts & Guide
- How Do Dogs Know How to Swim? Vet-Verified Facts & Explanation

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## About the Author



[Elizabeth Gray](#)

Elizabeth Gray is a lifelong lover of all animals great and small. She got her first cat at 5 years old and at 14, she started working for her local veterinarian. Elizabeth spent more than 20 years working as a veterinary nurse before stepping away to become a stay-at-home parent to her daughter. Now, she is excited to share her hard-earned knowledge (literally--she has scars) with the readers. Elizabeth lives in Iowa with her family, including her two furry kids, Linnard, a husky mix and Algernon, the world's most patient cat. When not writing, she enjoys reading, watching all sports but especially soccer, and spending time outdoors with her family.

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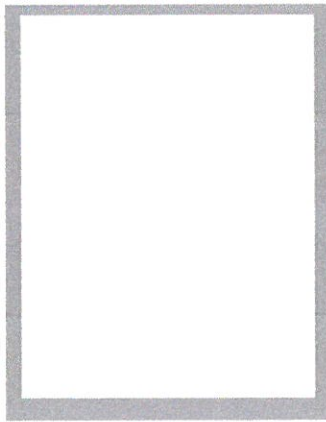
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