

Violence Policy Center: Wisconsin ranks #8 in rate of women murdered by men

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Washington, DC — Wisconsin ranks eighth in the nation in the rate of women murdered by men according to the most recent edition of the annual Violence Policy Center (VPC) study [When Men Murder Women](#).

Each year the VPC releases this report in advance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. The study uses 2020 data, the most recent year for which information is available. The study covers homicides involving one female murder victim and one male offender using data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Supplementary Homicide Report.

The study found that nationwide, 89 percent of women killed by men were murdered by someone they knew and that the most common weapon used was a gun.

“Women killed by men are most often killed by someone they know and more than half were killed by an intimate partner,” states VPC Government Affairs Director Kristen Rand. “Much more must be done to identify and implement effective strategies to prevent these tragedies. More resources are needed at the federal, state, and local levels to help keep women safe.”

This is the 25th edition of [When Men Murder Women](#). From 1996 to 2020, the rate of women murdered by men in single victim/single offender incidents dropped from 1.57 per 100,000 women in 1996 to 1.34 per 100,000 women in 2020, a decrease of 15 percent. Since reaching its low of 1.08 per 100,000 women in 2014, the rate has increased, with 2020's rate of 1.34 per 100,000 women up 24 percent since 2014.

The study also has a separate section focusing on Black females killed by males.

Below is a table of the states with the 10 highest rates of females murdered by males in single victim/single offender incidents in 2020.

For each of these 10 states, the study offers a detailed summary including: the number of victims by age group and race; the most common weapons used; the victim to offender relationships; and, the circumstances of the homicides.

Ranking	State	Number of Female Homicide Victims	Homicide Rate per 100,000 Females
1	Alaska	12	3.43
2	Oklahoma	66	3.28
3	Wyoming	8	2.80
4	Arkansas	41	2.66
5	Louisiana	52	2.18
6 (tie)	North Dakota	8	2.14
6 (tie)	Missouri	67	2.14
8	Wisconsin	60	2.05
9	South Dakota	9	2.04
10	Kentucky	46	2.02

National statistics from the study include the following.

- Nationwide, 2,059 females were murdered by males in single victim/single offender incidents in 2020, at a rate of 1.34 per 100,000. Of the 2,059 female homicide victims, 1,259 were white, 641 were Black, 60 were Asian or Pacific Islander, 44 were American Indian or Alaskan Native, and in 55 cases the race of the victim was not identified.
- Nearly nine out of 10 victims (89 percent) knew their offenders. Of the victims who knew their offenders, 60 percent were wives or other intimate acquaintances of their killers. Eight times as many females were murdered by a male they knew than were killed by male strangers.
- Black women are disproportionately impacted by lethal domestic violence. In 2020, Black females were murdered by males at a rate of 2.96 per 100,000, nearly three times the rate of 1.07 per 100,000 for white women murdered by

men.

- Firearms were the weapons most commonly used by males to murder females in 2020. Nationwide, for homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 61 percent of female victims were shot and killed with a gun. Of the homicides committed with guns, 64 percent were killed with handguns.
- The number of females shot and killed by their husband or intimate acquaintance was nearly three times the total number murdered by male strangers using all weapons combined.
- The overwhelming majority of these homicides were not related to any other felony crime, such as rape or robbery. Nationwide, for homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 88 percent of the homicides were not related to the commission of another felony. Most often, females were killed by males in the course of an argument between the victim and the offender.

[The study](#) calculates the rate of women murdered by men by dividing the total number of females murdered by males in single victim/single offender incidents by the total female population and multiplying the result by 100,000. This is the standard and accepted method of comparing fatal levels of gun violence.

To view the full report, please visit <http://vpc.org/studies/wmmw2022.pdf>.

To see previous editions of *When Men Murder Women*, please click [here](#).

For a slideshow presenting key findings from the study, click [here](#).