

Rape and sexual assault statistics: sources

More than 1 in 4 women have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult

1 in 18 men have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult

Source: Office for National Statistics (2023)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/sexualoffencesprevalenceandvictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales>

How did we get to these figures?

As Table 1 in [this ONS dataset](#) shows, an estimated:

- 27% of all adult women aged 16 to 74 in England and Wales have experienced sexual assault at least once since the age of 16, and
- 5.7% of all adult men aged 16 to 74 in England and Wales have experienced sexual assault at least once since the age of 16.

Please note:

- 1) These statistics are based on data for the year ending March 2022 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The Crime Survey was only able to collect six months' data face-to-face for the year ending March 2022. The ONS says that 'caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates'.
- 2) The CSEW uses 'sexual assault' as an umbrella term that includes the following sexual offences, including attempts of each: rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and indecent exposure.

1 in 6 children have been sexually abused

Source: NSPCC (2011)

Publication:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1710/statistics-briefing-child-sexual-abuse.pdf>

How did we get to this figure?

As [this NSPCC briefing](#) states, a 2011 NSPCC study that asked 2,275 children aged 11 to 17 in the UK about their experiences of abuse, 16.5% said they had experienced any form of sexual abuse, including non-contact abuse, at some point in their lives.

Please note:

- 1) According to the NSPCC, this 2011 study 'is still the only large-scale research study in the UK to ask children, rather than adults, about their experiences of maltreatment. It is the findings from this age group which the NSPCC uses when talking about the prevalence of abuse, as it best represents the experiences of children themselves'.

67,938 rapes were recorded by police between October 2022 and September 2023

Source: Office for National Statistics (2024)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingseptember2023>

How did we get to this figure?

As [this ONS statistical bulletin](#) states, 'Of all sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending September 2023, 36% (67,938) were rape offences. This was a 4% decrease from 70,423 offences in the year ending September 2022.'

By the end of that 12-month period, charges had been brought in just 2.4% (1,631) of cases

Just 2 in 100 rapes recorded by police between October 2022 and September 2023 resulted in a charge that same year

Source: Home Office (2024)

Publications:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/crime-outcomes-year-to-september-2023-data-tables>

How did we get to this figure?

As Table 2.2 in [this Home Office publication](#) shows, 2.4% of rapes recorded by police in the year to September 2023 resulted in someone being charged.

After being reported to the police, adult rape cases take an average of more than 2 years to complete in court

Source: UK Government

Publication:

<https://criminal-justice-delivery-data-dashboards.justice.gov.uk/>

How did we get to these figures?

As the [criminal justice system overview](#) on the data dashboard shows, the most recent rolling annual average for the number of days taken by police to charge an offender in adult rape cases is 315. Meanwhile, as the [charge to case completion at court table](#) on the data dashboard shows, the most recent rolling annual average for the number of days between charge and completion at the Crown Court is 418.

So, we add 315 and 418 together to get the average total time it takes adult rape cases to complete in court from reporting: 733 days (2.01 years).

Meanwhile, there's currently a record number of sexual offence cases that are waiting to go to court: 9,792

And a record number of adult rape cases: 2,591

Source: Ministry of Justice (2023)

Publication:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657845710467eb001355f5b2/cc_rdos_tool.xlsx

How did we get to this figure?

As the Pivot Table Analytical Tool shows, in the third quarter of 2023 (the last quarter for which there is publicly available data) there were 9,792 sexual offence cases and 2,591 adult rape cases outstanding. These are the highest figures for any quarter since 2014, the year the Pivot Tool dates back to.

1 in 2 rapes against women are carried out by their partner or ex-partner

6 in 7 rapes against women are carried out by someone they know

Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/natureofsexualassaultbyrapeorpenetrationenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

How did we get to these figures?

As Figure 2 in [this ONS article](#) shows, when looking at the victim-perpetrator relationship in instances of rape or assault by penetration (including attempts) that women aged 16 to 59 in England and Wales have experienced since the age of 16, a partner or ex-partner was the perpetrator in 45% of cases.

The victim-perpetrator relationship in the remainder of cases was as follows:

- Family member – 4%
- Other known – 37%
- Stranger – 15%

Please note:

- 1) These statistics are based on combined data for the years ending March 2017 and March 2020 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

91% of people prosecuted for sexual offences are men aged 18+

Source: Office for National Statistics (2018)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/sexualoffendingministryofjusticeappendixtables>

How did we get to these figures?

As Table 2 in [this ONS dataset](#) of compiled Ministry of Justice appendix tables shows, in the year ending December 2017:

- 11,311 people were prosecuted for sexual offences in total.
- 10,317 of these were men aged 18 and over (826 were aged 18-20; 1,100 were aged 21-24; 8,391 were aged 25+).
- 657 were young men and boys aged 12-17.

5 in 6 women who are raped don't report – and the same is true for 4 in 5 men

Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/sexualoffencesinenglandandwalesoverview/march2020>

How did we get to these figures?

As [this ONS bulletin](#) states, in England and Wales, 'fewer than one in six (16%) female victims and fewer than one in five (19%) male victims aged 16 to 59 years of [rape or assault by penetration (including attempts)] since the age of 16 years reported it to the police'.

Please note:

- 1) These statistics are based on data for the year ending March 2020 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

Lots of these survivors tell someone else what happened. So, why don't they tell the police?

- **40% said 'embarrassment'**

- **38% said they didn't think the police could help**
- **34% said they thought it would be humiliating**

Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/natureofsexualassaultbyrapeorpenetrationenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

How did we get to these figures?

As [this ONS article](#) states, when looking at adults aged 16 to 59 in England and Wales who have experienced rape or assault by penetration (including attempts) since the age of 16, 'fewer than one in six (16%) reported the assault to the police and of those that told someone but not the police, 40% stated embarrassment as a reason, 38% did not think the police could help, and 34% thought it would be humiliating.

Please note:

- 1) These statistics are based on combined data for the years ending March 2017 and March 2020 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

6.5 million women in England and Wales have been raped or sexually assaulted since the age of 16

Source: Office for National Statistics (2023)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/sexualoffencesprevalenceandvictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales>

How did we get to this figure?

As Table 7 in [this ONS dataset](#) shows, an estimated:

- 6,542,000 women aged 16 years and over in England and Wales have experienced some form of sexual assault since the age of 16, as of the year ending March 2022, and
- 1,341,000 men aged 16 years and over in England and Wales have experienced some form of sexual assault since the age of 16, as of the year ending March 2022.

Please note:

- 1) These statistics are based on data for the year ending March 2022 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The Crime Survey was only able to collect six months' data face-to-face for the year ending March 2022. The ONS says that 'caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates'.
- 2) The CSEW uses 'sexual assault' as an umbrella term that includes the following sexual offences, including attempts of each: rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and indecent exposure.

9 in 10 girls and young women in schools say sexist name-calling and being sent unwanted 'dick pics' or other images of a sexual nature happens to them or other girls and young women their age

Source: Ofsted (2021)

Publication:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges>

How did we get to this figure?

As Ofsted states in its [Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges](#):

'On our visits ... nearly 90% of girls, and nearly 50% of boys, said being sent explicit pictures or videos of things they did not want to see happens a lot or sometimes to them or their peers ... [while] 92% of girls, and 74% of boys, said sexist name-calling happens a lot or sometimes to them or their peers. The frequency of these harmful sexual behaviours means that some children and young people consider them normal.'

Please note:

- 1) Ofsted only covers England.

1 in 2 adult survivors of rape have experienced it more than once

Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/natureofsexualassaultbyrapeorpenetrationenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

How did we get to this figure?

As [this ONS article](#) states, when looking at adults aged 16 to 59 in England and Wales who have experienced rape or assault by penetration (including attempts) since the age of 16, ‘almost half (49%) had been a victim more than once’.

Please note:

- 1) This statistic is based on combined data for the years ending March 2017 and March 2020 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The year ending March 2020 was the last time the CSEW produced reliable data on sexual violence and abuse due to the subsequent impact of Covid.

How many women are raped or sexually assaulted every year?

798,000. That’s 1 in 30 women

Source: Office for National Statistics (2023)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/sexualoffencesinenglandandwalesoverview/march2022>

How did we get to these figures?

- As [this ONS bulletin](#) states, ‘The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) provides the best measure of victimisation and estimated that 2.3% of adults (3.3% women and 1.2% men) aged 16 years and over were victims of sexual assault (including attempts) in the year ending March 2022 survey; this equates to an estimated 1.1 million adults (798,000 women and 275,000 men)’.

Please note:

- 1) These statistics are based on data for the year ending March 2022 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The Crime Survey was only able to collect six months’ data face-to-face for the year ending March 2022. The ONS says that ‘caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates’.

- 2) The CSEW uses 'sexual assault' as an umbrella term that includes the following sexual offences, including attempts of each: rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and indecent exposure.

1 in 3 adult survivors of rape experience it in their own home

Source: Office for National Statistics (2021)

Publication:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/natureofsexualassaultbyrapeorpenetrationenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

How did we get to this figure?

As [this ONS article](#) states, over one-third (37%) of adults aged 16 to 59 in England and Wales who have experienced rape or assault by penetration (including attempts) since the age of 16 were 'victimised' in their own home.

This compares with the nearly one in 10 (9%) who were 'victimised on the street, in a car park, park, or another open public space'.

Please note:

- 1) These statistics are based on combined data for the years ending March 2017 and March 2020 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales. The year ending March 2020 was the last time the Crime Survey for England and Wales produced reliable data on sexual violence and abuse due to the subsequent impact of Covid.

Where else can you check for statistics about rape and other forms of sexual violence and abuse?

End Violence Against Women: endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk

Crown Prosecution Service: cps.gov.uk

rapecrisis.org.uk



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Office for National Statistics: ons.gov.uk