

Source: Gun Violence Archive | Data from 2020-2023. | By The New York Times

Tracking Violence

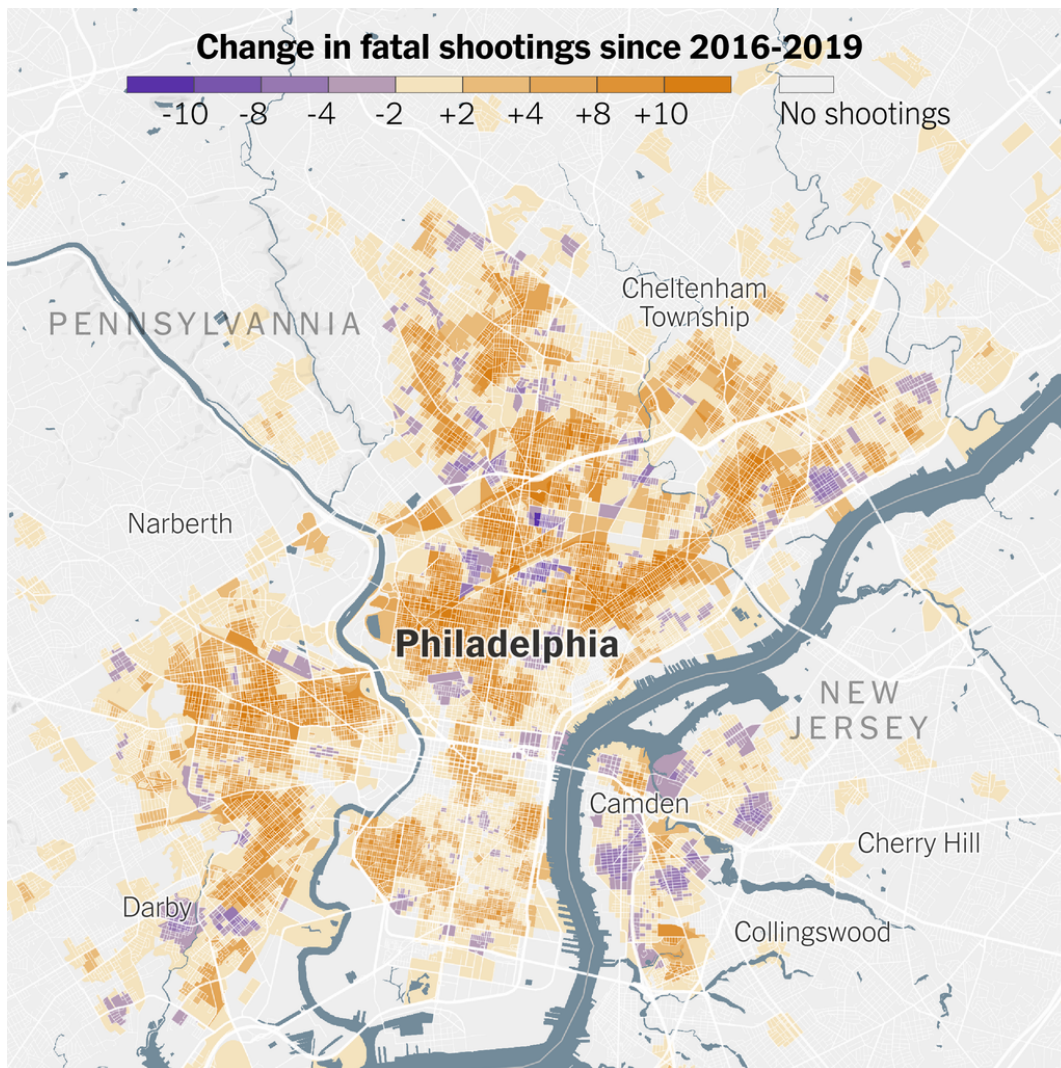


By Robert Gebeloff
Data reporter

As Covid swept the United States, another epidemic took hold: Americans shot one another at the fastest pace since the 1990s.

To document the toll, we plotted every fatal shooting on a map and then compared the four pandemic years with the four years that came before. Not only were more people killed, we found, but the boundaries of where these killings took place expanded. By the end of last year, one in seven Americans lived within a quarter mile of a recent fatal shooting, up from one in nine before

the pandemic.



Source: Gun Violence Archive | By The New York Times

Why did shootings surge during the pandemic? Americans bought more guns, turning violent disputes more deadly. They also used more drugs, leading to more violent conflicts. School buildings closed, and once-busy streets emptied. Gangs became more active. And after George Floyd's murder, reform measures and criticism of the police led some departments to pull back from enforcement.

We have been able to tell the story of gun violence more granularly with data from the [Gun Violence Archive](#) — neighborhood by neighborhood, instead of city by city. The analysis, [which The Times published today](#), found:

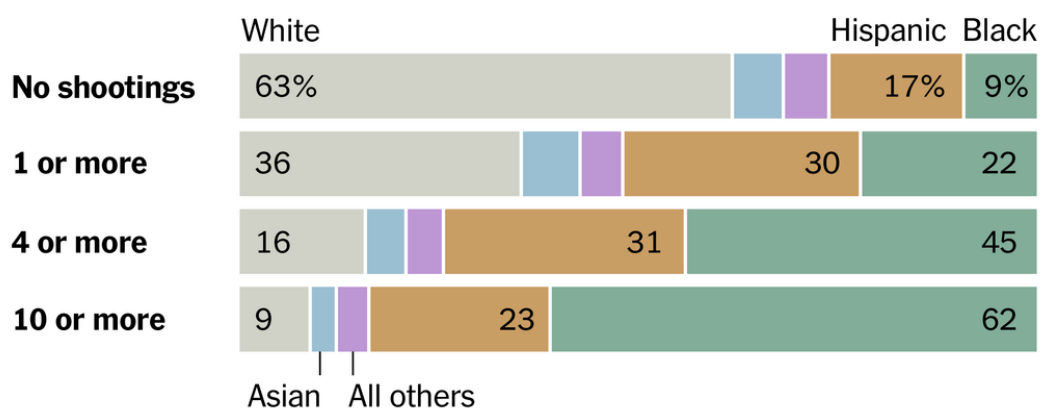
- The violence spread in cities nationwide. One area of downtown Austin,

Texas, famous for its thriving nightlife saw 17 shootings during the pandemic years, up from six in the four years before. In Everett, Wash., a smaller city where gun violence had been rare, a series of shootouts involved young people.

- The shootings got worse in dangerous neighborhoods, too. The Kensington section of Philadelphia was already one of the most violent places in the United States. One block of 167 residents had 24 fatal shootings in the four years before the pandemic. In the four years that followed, there were 64.
- A citywide homicide rate offers an incomplete picture, because the effects of violence are felt unevenly. One-quarter of Chicago residents lived in neighborhoods with four or more shootings during the pandemic years, while one-third lived in areas where there were no fatal shootings nearby.

If you [explore our interactive](#), you'll see that different racial groups experience different levels of gun violence. African Americans and Latinos tend to live in neighborhoods that are far more violent than those of white Americans.

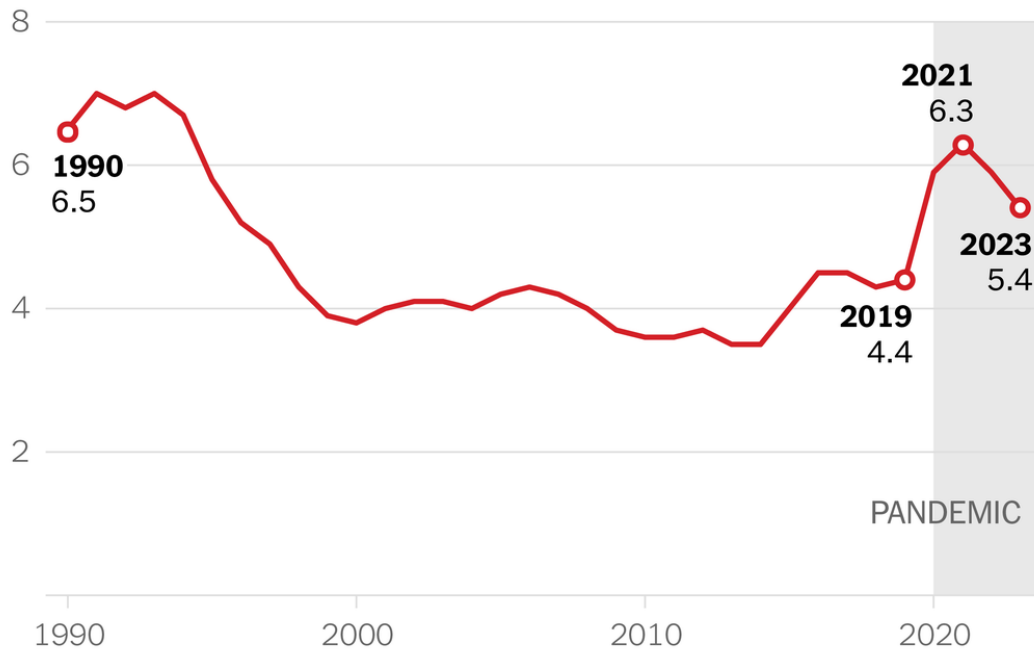
Racial demographics of neighborhoods in the United States with:



Sources: Gun Violence Archive; U.S. Census Bureau | By The New York Times

While the homicide rate is falling in many cities, it has not returned to prepandemic levels. And it is still up from its low point in the middle of the last decade.

Gun homicide victims per 100,000 people in the United States



Source: C.D.C. | The rate for 2023 is estimated using Gun Violence Archive data. | By The New York Times

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