

# How Often Do Police Officers Manage to Catch Hit and Run Drivers?

Kate Spurdens March 19, 2019



Hit and Run Accidents

**Hit and run accidents are a terrible crime to commit, but they can happen anywhere at any time. Here is how the police deals with crimes such as these.**

([Newswire.net](#) -- March 19, 2019) -- It's one of those things that people read about in the news and shake their heads over. "Tsk, tsk," they say. "How could someone do that?" But the fact is that hit and run drivers are everywhere, and no one knows how they will react when an accident actually happens until they are involved in it.

Humans have a "fight or flight" instinct in them that has allowed each person to survive dangerous situations their entire lives - and the human race in general for millennia. That instinct often kicks in when a person knows that they have caused an accident and perfectly normal people react in abnormal ways. Sometimes they regret their actions and quickly return to the scene, while other times they try to hide and deny responsibility, even to themselves.

However, technological innovations in the 21st century make it harder and harder for people to get away with crimes like causing an accident and fleeing from the scene. Now, police have their own evidence-catching equipment in addition to the cameras that tend to be randomly placed throughout every block.

Between all of the possible ways that a perpetrator may have been placed at the scene, it's a wonder that crimes are still being committed. The likelihood is very good that you are going to get caught.

It's against the law in the United States to flee from the scene of an accident - but just how often do police officers manage to catch hit and run drivers and enforce that law? You might be surprised.

## Statistics on Hit and Run Accidents

In 2018, [ABC News reported](#) that hit and run deaths had reached an all-time high, according to a study by AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. Over 2000 people were killed by drivers who fled the scene in 2016, an increase of over 62% from the previous analytical study's downward trend in 2009.

While these were mostly pedestrians and cyclists, the trend continues to rise in a staggering, scary direction. Hit and run accidents are defined as occurring when at least one person that was involved in the accident leaves the scene without stopping to leave their information or give help to the others involved in the crash, or they fail to report that the incident occurred.

Some surprising facts on hit and run accidents include:

- States with the highest death rates from these accidents include Florida, Louisiana, and New Mexico.
- States with the lowest death rates caused by fleeing drivers in hit and runs include Maine, Minnesota, and New Hampshire.
- Most accidents involving pedestrian hit and runs occur between midnight and 4 a.m. and on roads with low-speed limits where people feel generally safe crossing.
- Weather is actually not a driving factor in determining the likelihood of a hit and run accident.

Regardless of the reason behind the accident, though, the fact is that fleeing the scene where you caused damage to a person or property is illegal, and if you get caught, the consequences become much, much higher to pay.

## Methods of Catching Hit and Run Drivers

Law enforcement officers have been catching criminals for as long as they have been around and their methods have been getting better and better. Of course, the most important factor in their success is time, so if you were a victim of or an observer of a hit and run accident, it is crucial to report it as soon as possible.

Between quickly arriving at the scene and gathering evidence and all of the investigative methods available, your missing driver will probably be quickly found.

Police officers use multiple methods to track down people who have evaded the scene of an accident after causing damage:

- Information at the scene of the collision, such as tire marks from the brakes if they were driving fast and tried to stop quickly, is invaluable.
- Witnesses who may have seen the accident or events that led up to it can give a treasure trove of information. Someone may even have seen a driver leaving the scene and acting irrationally or driving with damage to their vehicle.
- The damage left behind on the property at the scene, such as pieces of the car that left, are often used by experts to figure out the make and model of the vehicle. Broken headlights, mirrors, and even paint left at the site on the point of impact can tell a story that helps police officers track down the guilty party.
- Photographs of the damaged vehicle parts can aid in a search. If someone saw a vehicle with damage matching the description, they can help the investigators.
- Surveillance footage surrounding the scene and areas nearby have been key to many solved crimes, including hit and runs. It is often surprising who has cameras running outside of their homes and businesses at all hours. Scouring the footage from all of them can take days or even weeks, but eventually, they can produce gold.
- Video footage from passersby on their cell phones or dash cams has put thousands of criminals behind bars. This is solid evidence that many people don't realize is important but could be exactly what law enforcement officers need to solve a crime.
- Media relations are strategically used in the case of a serious crime that has no pertinent leads or is time-sensitive. While the police department does not want to release anything that may be upsetting to the victim's family, they do want the crime to get solved. To do this, they can give certain facts about the case to the media to help spread the word and get more people's attention. Someone may know something that they didn't realize they knew and come forward with the key to solving the crime.

With all of the avenues of information out there for law enforcement officers to follow up on, including forensic evidence and experts, the possibility for police officers to catch hit and run drivers is getting better every day. These perpetrators are appearing in the courts in personal injury lawsuits by the droves as the evidence helps to hold them accountable for their actions.

## What Does a Hit and Run Case Involve?

When a hit and run case results in minor property damage, there is not much that police officers will do to solve it, but if it results in serious property damage, injury, or even a fatality, they will use every source possible to solve the crime.

It is more likely that a serious accident will be resolved because there are usually attorneys, crash investigators, and insurance companies involved in addition to the police investigators.

Hiring an attorney is a smart, strategic move in any unsolved motor vehicle case. Lawyers can provide more investigative sources and avenues and encourage law enforcement officers to investigate more thoroughly. Many larger law firms also have their own investigative team that will work tirelessly on your lawsuit to put together a strong case full of evidence.

While the police do want the perpetrator to be caught, your lawyer thinks outside of the box for you and looks towards other potential sources of liability. For instance, the entire accident may have been avoided had there been safe lighting in the area or had the roads been properly maintained. Your lawyer will look at the entire picture and see if there are alternative avenues to get you compensated for your injuries, even if the person who caused the accident is never caught.

If you are not sure [how to find out if you have a case if hurt in a motor vehicle accident](#), you should call or schedule a consultation with a lawyer that focuses on car accidents. Hiring someone with experience in your particular situation helps to increase the odds that your case comes to a successful resolution.

## **Fleeing from the Scene of an Accident - It's Not a Smart Move**

Basic human survival skills mean that our fight or flight instincts kick in when the adrenaline rises in a dangerous situation. But just because someone chooses the “flight” mode to survive does not make it an acceptable choice. The adrenaline will wear off and they will realize that what they did was wrong. At that point, they should turn themselves in and take responsibility for their actions.

If they don't, though, the police will step in, along with insurance investigators, legal representatives, and crime scene technicians, to bring them to justice. And if you were injured in the hit and run accident, while those experts are doing their jobs, you will need to be able to move on with your life and seek treatment for your medical care.

Finding an attorney to represent you can make this difficult process easier to handle and also give you more of a fighting chance to find the person that hit you. Call a personal injury lawyer today and talk to them to see how they can help you receive compensation for your injuries and damages, even if you are not sure if you have a case.

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