

Table 2.24

Attitudes toward a police officer striking an adult male citizen

By demographic characteristics, United States, selected years 1973-96

Question: "Are there any situations you can imagine in which you would approve of a police-
man striking an adult male citizen?"

| | 1973 | | 1975 | | 1976 | | 1978 | | 1980 | | 1983 | | 1984 | | 1986 | | 1987 | |
|--------------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| National | 73% | 25% | 73% | 23% | 76% | 20% | 76% | 20% | 73% | 24% | 78% | 20% | 69% | 28% | 72% | 25% | 73% | 23% |
| Sex | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 75 | 22 | 77 | 20 | 81 | 17 | 82 | 16 | 80 | 18 | 83 | 15 | 75 | 23 | 80 | 17 | 80 | 17 |
| Female | 71 | 28 | 70 | 26 | 72 | 22 | 72 | 23 | 68 | 29 | 73 | 23 | 65 | 32 | 66 | 31 | 67 | 27 |
| Race | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White | 77 | 21 | 77 | 20 | 79 | 18 | 80 | 17 | 76 | 21 | 80 | 17 | 73 | 25 | 76 | 22 | 76 | 20 |
| Black/other | 42 | 54 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 44 | 48 | 45 | 45 | 49 | 59 | 37 | 50 | 46 | 49 | 46 | 56 | 35 |
| Age | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 to 20 years | 55 | 45 | 70 | 27 | 78 | 20 | 67 | 30 | 71 | 29 | 78 | 22 | 71 | 27 | 60 | 38 | 71 | 29 |
| 21 to 29 years | 76 | 22 | 75 | 22 | 78 | 20 | 79 | 19 | 76 | 23 | 81 | 17 | 72 | 26 | 74 | 25 | 73 | 24 |
| 30 to 49 years | 76 | 23 | 79 | 18 | 79 | 17 | 79 | 18 | 79 | 20 | 81 | 17 | 75 | 24 | 78 | 21 | 77 | 19 |
| 50 years and older | 70 | 26 | 68 | 27 | 73 | 23 | 73 | 21 | 66 | 28 | 72 | 24 | 62 | 34 | 65 | 30 | 68 | 26 |
| Education^a | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| College | 84 | 14 | 86 | 13 | 85 | 13 | 85 | 12 | 82 | 17 | 87 | 11 | 79 | 20 | 85 | 14 | 83 | 14 |
| High school graduate | 72 | 27 | 71 | 26 | 76 | 20 | 76 | 21 | 73 | 24 | 75 | 23 | 67 | 31 | 67 | 31 | 70 | 26 |
| Less than high school graduate | 56 | 38 | 58 | 35 | 62 | 33 | 59 | 33 | 52 | 41 | 56 | 36 | 46 | 46 | 51 | 38 | 48 | 39 |
| Income | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| \$50,000 and over | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| \$30,000 to \$49,999 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| \$20,000 to \$29,999 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Under \$20,000 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Occupation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Professional/business | 83 | 16 | 84 | 14 | 84 | 14 | 86 | 11 | 83 | 15 | 85 | 13 | 76 | 22 | 83 | 15 | 86 | 12 |
| Clerical | 80 | 18 | 77 | 20 | 78 | 18 | 79 | 19 | 78 | 21 | 83 | 16 | 74 | 26 | 70 | 28 | 66 | 29 |
| Manual | 66 | 32 | 66 | 30 | 73 | 24 | 72 | 25 | 67 | 29 | 71 | 26 | 64 | 32 | 66 | 30 | 65 | 29 |
| Farmer | 69 | 22 | 63 | 27 | 70 | 28 | 79 | 8 | 70 | 24 | 92 | 3 | 61 | 29 | 63 | 34 | 78 | 15 |
| Region | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Northeast | 68 | 31 | 74 | 24 | 75 | 22 | 74 | 25 | 74 | 24 | 77 | 20 | 65 | 34 | 68 | 28 | 71 | 26 |
| Midwest | 72 | 25 | 77 | 21 | 78 | 18 | 80 | 18 | 70 | 26 | 76 | 22 | 70 | 26 | 72 | 26 | 72 | 24 |
| South | 73 | 25 | 71 | 24 | 74 | 20 | 74 | 21 | 71 | 26 | 77 | 20 | 67 | 30 | 70 | 26 | 71 | 23 |
| West | 79 | 19 | 70 | 26 | 78 | 20 | 80 | 16 | 79 | 18 | 84 | 14 | 76 | 23 | 78 | 21 | 79 | 17 |
| Religion | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Protestant | 74 | 24 | 73 | 22 | 77 | 19 | 75 | 21 | 74 | 22 | 78 | 19 | 70 | 27 | 73 | 24 | 74 | 22 |
| Catholic | 70 | 27 | 71 | 27 | 74 | 23 | 76 | 21 | 70 | 28 | 75 | 22 | 66 | 32 | 68 | 30 | 68 | 27 |
| Jewish | 71 | 26 | 91 | 4 | 70 | 30 | 72 | 24 | 81 | 16 | 83 | 12 | 67 | 26 | 76 | 18 | 80 | 15 |
| None | 69 | 30 | 76 | 23 | 82 | 16 | 85 | 13 | 70 | 26 | 80 | 18 | 74 | 25 | 76 | 22 | 75 | 21 |
| Politics | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Republican | 76 | 22 | 76 | 19 | 79 | 17 | 76 | 20 | 78 | 20 | 86 | 13 | 74 | 24 | 78 | 19 | 82 | 16 |
| Democrat | 67 | 31 | 67 | 29 | 72 | 24 | 73 | 23 | 67 | 29 | 72 | 26 | 62 | 35 | 68 | 30 | 66 | 29 |
| Independent | 79 | 19 | 78 | 19 | 79 | 17 | 80 | 18 | 75 | 22 | 79 | 17 | 73 | 25 | 73 | 24 | 74 | 21 |

Note: The "not sure" category has been omitted; therefore percents may not sum to 100.
For a discussion of public opinion survey sampling procedures, see Appendix 6.

Source: National Opinion Research Center, "General Social Surveys, 1972-94," "General Social Surveys, 1996," Storrs, CT: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. (Machine-readable data files.) Table constructed by SOURCEBOOK staff.

^aIn 1996, education categories were revised slightly and therefore are not directly comparable to data presented for prior years.

| 1988 | | 1989 | | 1990 | | 1991 | | 1993 | | 1994 | | 1996 | |
|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| 73% | 23% | 70% | 24% | 70% | 25% | 66% | 30% | 73% | 22% | 71% | 26% | 67% | 29% |
| 77 | 20 | 77 | 18 | 77 | 19 | 71 | 27 | 81 | 16 | 80 | 18 | 75 | 21 |
| 69 | 25 | 66 | 28 | 64 | 30 | 62 | 33 | 68 | 27 | 64 | 32 | 60 | 35 |
| 77 | 19 | 74 | 21 | 73 | 22 | 70 | 26 | 77 | 19 | 76 | 22 | 71 | 25 |
| 51 | 41 | 51 | 40 | 52 | 41 | 44 | 51 | 51 | 40 | 48 | 46 | 47 | 45 |
| 74 | 26 | 69 | 31 | 59 | 36 | 53 | 42 | 69 | 28 | 56 | 38 | 50 | 46 |
| 70 | 26 | 73 | 21 | 74 | 24 | 68 | 30 | 80 | 19 | 70 | 27 | 68 | 28 |
| 79 | 18 | 74 | 20 | 74 | 23 | 72 | 27 | 75 | 22 | 76 | 22 | 70 | 26 |
| 68 | 26 | 65 | 28 | 63 | 28 | 58 | 34 | 68 | 24 | 66 | 30 | 63 | 31 |
| 78 | 19 | 78 | 17 | 78 | 19 | 73 | 24 | 79 | 18 | 79 | 19 | 74 | 23 |
| 73 | 23 | 66 | 30 | 64 | 30 | 64 | 32 | 70 | 26 | 66 | 32 | 62 | 33 |
| 50 | 36 | 53 | 34 | 48 | 33 | 36 | 54 | 55 | 33 | 52 | 40 | 52 | 39 |
| X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 83 | 16 | 81 | 18 | 76 | 22 |
| X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 74 | 23 | 80 | 18 | 71 | 27 |
| X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 77 | 20 | 69 | 28 | 68 | 28 |
| X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 65 | 29 | 60 | 35 | 57 | 37 |
| 79 | 19 | 80 | 14 | 80 | 18 | 75 | 23 | 79 | 17 | 80 | 18 | 75 | 21 |
| 77 | 19 | 70 | 26 | 73 | 24 | 66 | 30 | 74 | 22 | 67 | 30 | 60 | 36 |
| 69 | 26 | 64 | 30 | 64 | 29 | 60 | 35 | 72 | 24 | 68 | 29 | 66 | 30 |
| 62 | 25 | 75 | 12 | 50 | 38 | 55 | 35 | 47 | 47 | 70 | 20 | 58 | 37 |
| 68 | 29 | 62 | 30 | 68 | 24 | 63 | 34 | 71 | 25 | 65 | 32 | 57 | 38 |
| 70 | 24 | 79 | 19 | 69 | 26 | 66 | 30 | 67 | 27 | 71 | 26 | 69 | 27 |
| 75 | 19 | 71 | 20 | 67 | 27 | 65 | 31 | 77 | 18 | 71 | 26 | 66 | 29 |
| 77 | 20 | 66 | 29 | 76 | 20 | 70 | 26 | 76 | 20 | 78 | 20 | 76 | 21 |
| 74 | 21 | 73 | 22 | 70 | 25 | 67 | 28 | 74 | 21 | 70 | 27 | 69 | 26 |
| 66 | 29 | 66 | 28 | 67 | 27 | 62 | 34 | 67 | 27 | 71 | 25 | 62 | 35 |
| 91 | 4 | 75 | 19 | 71 | 29 | 68 | 32 | 79 | 21 | 76 | 22 | 61 | 37 |
| 78 | 20 | 68 | 25 | 74 | 19 | 65 | 34 | 78 | 21 | 77 | 22 | 70 | 26 |
| 75 | 21 | 76 | 18 | 76 | 19 | 72 | 25 | 78 | 17 | 77 | 20 | 78 | 18 |
| 69 | 26 | 69 | 26 | 64 | 30 | 58 | 37 | 65 | 29 | 66 | 30 | 60 | 36 |
| 75 | 20 | 66 | 26 | 70 | 25 | 68 | 28 | 76 | 20 | 71 | 26 | 66 | 30 |