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List of cases of police brutality

This list compiles incidents alleged or proved to be due to police brutality that attracted significant media or historical attention. Many cases are alleged to be of brutality; some cases are more than allegations, with official reports concluding that a crime was committed by police, with some criminal convictions for offences such as grievous bodily harm, planting evidence and wrongful arrest.

This list should include only cases outside of the following countries, each of which has their own list:

[Argentina](#) · [Canada](#) · [India](#) · [Iran](#) · [Pakistan](#) · [United Kingdom](#)

If you find a case from one of those countries on this list, please move it to the correct country list.

Before 1990

- 21 September 1920: [Sack of Balbriggan](#) – [Royal Irish Constabulary](#) (RIC) officers known as "Black and Tans" burned and looted numerous houses and pubs in [Balbriggan](#), Ireland. They also beat two local men to death. This was a reprisal for the [Irish Republican Army](#) (IRA) assassination of two RIC officers in the town.
- 22 September 1920: In reprisal for an IRA ambush, RIC policemen and British soldiers killed five civilians and burnt 16 houses and shops in west [County Clare](#), Ireland.
- 1–9 November 1920: In revenge for the IRA's killing of two local policemen, Black and Tans "besieged" the town of [Tralee](#), Ireland. They imposed a curfew, fired on civilians in the streets, let no food in for a week and shot dead eight people in the town and surrounding area, many of them civilians.^[1]
- 21 November 1920: The [Croke Park massacre](#) in [Dublin](#), Ireland. Royal Irish Constabulary officers opened-fire on civilians who were watching a [Gaelic football match](#) in [Croke Park](#); 14 were killed and 60–70 wounded. The attack was believed to be revenge for an IRA assassination operation earlier in the day.
- 24 March 1922: The [McMahon killings](#) in [Belfast](#), [Northern Ireland](#). Officers of the [Ulster Special Constabulary](#) (USC) broke into a house owned by an Irish Catholic family and shot all eight males inside. Six were killed. It is believed to have been a reprisal for the IRA's killing of two policemen the day before.
- 1 April 1922: The [Arnon Street killings](#) in [Belfast](#), [Northern Ireland](#). Ulster Special Constables broke into several Irish Catholic homes, shooting and beating six Catholics to death, including a child. This was believed to have been a reprisal for the IRA's killing of a policeman in the area.
- 19 May 1922: In revenge for the burning of a [Protestant-owned mill](#), a mob of Ulster Special Constables and [loyalists](#) attacked and burned many Catholic homes and businesses in [Desertmartin](#), [Northern Ireland](#). Special Constables took four Catholic men from their homes nearby, lined them up by the roadside and summarily executed them.^[2]
- 23 June 1922: A group of Ulster Special Constables opened fire on civilians in the village of [Cushendall](#), [Northern Ireland](#), while preparing to enforce a nightly curfew. Special Constables summarily executed three young Catholic men by shooting them at close range. They claimed

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they were ambushed by the IRA and returned fire, but a British government inquiry concluded that this was not true. The report was not made public for almost a century.^[3]

- 25 December 1951: Five Hispanic men and two white men were severely beaten by members of the Los Angeles Police Department, in an incident known as the Bloody Christmas. Eight officers were indicted for assault, and five were found guilty.
- 21 March 1960. South African police shot at a crowd of black anti-apartheid protesters, killing 69 and injuring over 180 in what became known as the Sharpeville massacre. Evidence showed that the police continued firing even when the crowd had turned to run, and the majority of those killed and wounded were shot in the back. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission later concluded that the police actions had constituted "gross human rights violations in that excessive force was unnecessarily used to stop a gathering of unarmed people." (see Sharpeville massacre article for sourcing).
- 17 October 1961. The French police attacked a large demonstration of unarmed and peaceful protesters of Algerian origin, killing between 70 and 200 (numbers are uncertain, partly because many were drowned after being thrown into the Seine with their hands tied), in the Paris massacre of 1961.
- 19 April 1969 in Derry, Northern Ireland. During rioting between Irish nationalists and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), officers broke into the home of Catholic civilian Samuel Devenny (42), who was not involved in the riots. The officers beat Devenny ferociously with batons. His young daughter (who was recovering from surgery) and a family friend were beaten unconscious. His older daughter and son were also attacked. It is believed the attack led to Devenny's death on 17 July 1969.^[4]
- 13 July 1969: Catholic civilian Francis McCloskey (67) was beaten with batons by Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) officers during street disturbances in Dungiven, Northern Ireland, and died of his injuries the following day. He is sometimes deemed to be the first death of "The Troubles".^[5]
- 14–15 August 1969: During the 1969 Northern Ireland riots, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) shot dead five Catholic civilians and opened-fire on crowds of Irish nationalist protesters. A 9-year-old boy was killed when police fired on a block of flats with Browning machine guns.
- 1967–74: the methods of the Greek military junta were documented in the docudrama *Your Neighbor's Son*. It focused on the brutalization of young Military Police recruits which turned them into torturers. Michalis Petrou, a conscript who became a notorious torturer, testified against his former colleagues.^[6]
- 1977. Steve Biko is widely believed to have been killed by police as a result of anti-apartheid demonstrations in South Africa.^[7]
- 1981: three people were killed by plastic bullets fired by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) in Northern Ireland during the 1981 Irish hunger strike protests,^{[8][9]} and many others were badly injured.

1990–1999

- 2 March 1991: Rodney King was beaten with batons and kicked by four Los Angeles Police Department officers. The four officers were charged with assault with a deadly weapon, and found not guilty, prompting riots in Los Angeles. The four officers were tried again in a federal court, and two of the officers were found guilty of violating King's civil rights.
- 29 August 1993: The Vigário Geral massacre occurred when 33 Brazilian law enforcement officers, including 28 military officers, sought revenge against drug traffickers for the killing of four police officers two days prior to the massacre. The officers opened fire on local residents in a

community north of Rio de Janeiro, killing 21 people. Six officers were convicted of the murders.

- 22 December 1994: Anthony Baez was fatally choked by New York Police Department officer Francis Livoti in the Bronx, following an altercation with him. In June 1998, Livoti was convicted in a federal court on charges of violating Baez's civil rights, and was sentenced to seven and a half years imprisonment.
- July 1996: During the Drumcree protests and riots in Northern Ireland, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) fired 6,000 plastic bullets over several days. The Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) condemned what it called the "completely indiscriminate" use of plastic bullets, while Human Rights Watch accused the police of using "excessive force".^[10] The two largest Irish nationalist political parties said they had lost faith in the RUC as an impartial police force.^[11]
- 3 January 1998: Six policemen from the North East Rand Dog Unit set their dogs on three suspected illegal immigrants, allowing the animals to attack the three men as the officers shouted racial insults. The incident was caught on video and televised nationally by the South African Broadcasting Corporation on 7 November 2000, causing widespread outrage. All six policemen were ultimately sentenced to jail terms of between four and five years each.^{[12][13]}



3 January 1998: Policemen from the North East Rand Dog Unit set their dogs on three Mozambican immigrants

2000–2009

- 2000: Officers from the Philadelphia Police Department attacked Thomas Jones while he was wounded^{[14][15][16][17][18]}
- 9 May 2001: police fired tear gas and plastic bullets into crowds at the Accra Sports Stadium, Ghana, causing a stampede in which 127 people died. It was Africa's worst sporting disaster. An official inquiry blamed police over-reaction,^[19] but prosecution failed to establish a case.
- 20–21 July 2001: Carlo Giuliani, protesting at the 27th G8 summit was shot dead by police in Genoa, Italy; the officer was tried, but acquitted on the grounds that he had acted in self-defence.^[20] 62 other protesters were hospitalized (including three comatose) after a brutal night-time raid on the Diaz school where they were sleeping. In a trial that concluded in 2010, twenty-five Italian police officers were convicted of grievous bodily harm, planting evidence and wrongful arrest.^[21]
- 23 May 2003: Ousmane Zongo, a Burkina Faso national, was unarmed as he was shot four times by a New York Police Department officer during a raid at a warehouse. Bryan Conroy was convicted of criminally negligent homicide and was sentenced to five years probation.
- 4 September 2005: Danziger Bridge shootings. Two unarmed civilians were killed and four others were wounded by New Orleans, Louisiana police officers. Five officers were found guilty in the deaths, and received sentencing ranging from 6 to 65 years of prison.
- 25 September 2005: 18-year-old Italian student Federico Aldrovandi was killed after being beaten up during an arrest in Ferrara. The four officers involved in the incident, Monica Segatto, Luca Pollastri, Enzo Pontani and Paolo Forlani were found guilty of manslaughter due to excessive force and faced 6 months in prison, after the initial sentence of 3 years and 6 months was reduced due to a controversial pardon issued in 2006 by the Italian Parliament.
- 3 May 2006: In San Salvador Atenco, Mexico, a group of police officers prevented a group of 60 flower vendors from selling at a market, and used violence against the resisters. The

confrontations lead to a civil unrest in the town, leaving two protesters dead and dozens of people, mostly women, were sexually assaulted by officers. The officers involved were charged by the National Human Rights Commission with using excessive force.

- 7 March 2006: Unarmed Joseph Erin Hamley was fatally shot by an Arkansas State Police trooper. The trooper was convicted of negligent homicide.
- 21 November 2006: Kathryn Johnston was fatally shot in her house by three Atlanta, Georgia undercover police officers, during a drug raid. One of the officers planted marijuana in her house. Three officers were convicted of manslaughter and were sentenced to five to ten years imprisonment.
- 7 September 2006: Eugene Ejike Obiora, a Nigerian-Norwegian student, was killed during an arrest where Obiora had behaved aggressively toward personnel at the social services office in Trondheim. Obiora died en route to a hospital after a police officer held him in a stranglehold. The case made headlines and three officers were accused of racism and excessive use of force, but they were cleared by police investigators and the chief prosecutor.
- 7 January 2008: Wei Wenhua was beaten to death by police officers in Hubei province, China.
- 6 December 2008: 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos was fatally shot by police officer Epaminondas Korkoneas in Athens, Greece. Demonstrations and riots erupted throughout Athens almost immediately after the shooting, sparking weeks of civil unrest and workplace and university occupations throughout Greece and beyond.^[22]
- 1 January 2009: Oscar Grant was fatally shot by BART Police officer Johannes Mehserle in Oakland, California, U.S. Grant was unarmed and laying on his stomach as he was shot. Mehserle was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter and was sentenced to two years of prison, and served 11 months.
- 1 April 2009: policing at the 2009 G-20 London summit protests included the controversial technique of kettling. A bystander, Ian Tomlinson, died shortly after being pushed to the ground by a police officer. An inquest found that Tomlinson was unlawfully killed. An officer in the Metropolitan Police's Territorial Support Group was charged with manslaughter, but found not guilty.^[23]

From 2010

- 6 June 2010: Khaled Mohamed Saeed, 28, was beaten to death by two Egyptian policemen in Alexandria, while he was in police custody. The officers were found guilty of manslaughter.
- 30 August 2010: John T. Williams, a deaf woodcarver, was fatally shot by Seattle, Washington police officer Ian Birk. Williams was walking away from Birk with a carving knife in his hand, and was shot four times. Birk was not charged by county prosecutors in Williams' death, and the Seattle Police Department's Firearms Review Board ruled that Birk was unjustified in shooting Williams and violated the department's policy. Birk resigned from the department.
- 5 October 2010: Danny Rodriguez, 29, was shot twice in the chest and killed by Phoenix, Arizona officer Richard Chrisman. Rodriguez was holding a bicycle as he was shot, and police were called to his family's home in response to a domestic dispute. Chrisman was found guilty of manslaughter, assault, and animal cruelty.^[24]
- 12 December 2010: Douglas Zerby was shot twelve times and killed by two Long Beach, California police officers. Police were called in response to Zerby holding a garden hose nozzle, which police claimed to have mistaken for a handgun. Zerby's family was awarded \$6.5 million after a jury found the Long Beach Police Department to be responsible for Zerby's death.
- 6 June 2011: 22-year-old Martin Neshkovski was beaten to death by Igor Spasov, a member of the

special police unit Tigers, in the center of Skopje, Republic of Macedonia during the celebration of the ruling party's VMRO-DPMNE election victory, supposedly because he wanted to climb on stage and congratulate the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski personally. After an unsuccessful attempt by the Macedonian institutions to cover up the murder,^[25] which was followed by two-day demonstrations in Skopje, Spasov admitted the murder. Protests were held daily throughout June and July, demanding greater control over special police unit members and political and moral responsibility.^[26]

- 9 July 2011: The United Nations human rights office expressed disappointment on the use of excessive force^{[27][28][29]} by the police against peaceful protestors in the Bersih 2.0 rally, which was organised by the Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (Bersih) calling for electoral reform in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- February 2012: Patricia Cook was fatally shot while in her SUV by Culpeper, Virginia officer Daniel Harmon-Wright. Harmon-Wright was convicted of voluntary manslaughter.^[30]
- 22 July 2012: Alecia Thomas was kicked and punched by Los Angeles Police Department officer Mary O'Callaghan during an arrest, and later died in police custody. O'Callaghan was found guilty of assault, but not guilty of causing her death. She was sentenced to three years imprisonment.^[31]
- 16 August 2012: The Marikana Massacre which occurred during the wildcat Marikana miners' strike was the single most lethal use of force by South African security forces against civilians since the Sharpeville massacre during the apartheid era.^{[32][33]}
- 26 February 2013: Mido Macia was handcuffed to and dragged by a police vehicle for 500 meters in Gauteng, South Africa. Eight officers were convicted of murder.
- 17 July 2013: Deng Zhengjia was beaten to death with a scale during an encounter with multiple City Urban Administrative and Law Enforcement Bureau officers who confronted Deng for selling watermelons in Hunan province, China.
- 29 August 2013: John Geer was fatally shot by officer Adam Torres in Springfield, Virginia, as his arms were raised up and a gun was on the ground away from him. Torres pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter.
- 12 February 2014: Bassil Da Costa was fatally shot during an opposition march in Caracas, Venezuela.^[34] Six Bolivarian Intelligence Service (SEBIN) officers were apprehended as a result.^[35]
- 22 February 2014: During the 2014 Venezuelan protests, a National Guardsman shot student Geraldine Moreno in the face at point blank range with shotgun pellets, who died in the hospital after sustaining wounds.^[36]
- 5 September 2014: Levar Jones was shot and injured by South Carolina State Trooper Sean Groubert after Groubert asked Jones to get out his license. Groubert was fired, and pleaded guilty to assault and battery.^[37]
- 14 September 2014: Bryce Masters, 17, was Tasered for 23 seconds by Independence, Missouri officer Timothy Runnels, during a traffic stop. Masters suffered from brain injuries as a result. Runnels pleaded guilty to violating Masters' civil rights, and was sentenced to four years of prison.^[38]
- 12 October 2014: Jack Jacquez, 27, was shot in the back and killed by officer James Ashby in Rocky Ford, Colorado. Jacquez was in his mother's kitchen and was unarmed as he was shot. Ashby was found guilty of second degree murder.^[39]
- 20 November 2014: Akai Gurley was fatally shot by New York City Police Officer Peter Liang, as Liang and another officer were patrolling an unlit stairwell in a housing project. The shooting was considered accidental by Liang and prosecutors, and Liang was convicted of criminally negligent

homicide.

- 28 December 2014: Michael Johansen was burglarizing a convenience store, and Baltimore Police Department officers arrived on the scene. Johansen reached into his waistband area, and officers shot and injured him. As Johansen was on the floor, officer Wesley Cagle shot him. Two officers were cleared in the shooting, but Cagle was charged and convicted of assault.^[40]
- 22 April 2015: William Chapman II, an 18-year-old shoplifting suspect, was shot in a Wal-Mart parking lot by Portsmouth, Virginia police officer Stephen Rankin. According to witnesses, Chapman had his fists raised in the air, and was standing at least six feet away from Rankin before Rankin fired two shots, striking Chapman in the face and chest. On 4 August 2016, Rankin was found not guilty of first-degree murder, but guilty of voluntary manslaughter.
- 25 November 2015: Andrew Thomas, 26, was driving drunk and crashed his car, killing his wife. Thomas emerged from his car, and Patrick Feaster, a Paradise, California police officer accidentally fired his gun once at Thomas, hitting him in the neck. Thomas died from his injuries in December 2015. In October 2016, Feaster was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter.^[41]
- 26 September 2016: Terence Crutcher, 40, was shot and killed by police officer Betty Jo Shelby in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He was unarmed during the encounter, in which he was standing near his vehicle in the middle of a street. Police stated that Crutcher consistently reached into his pocket, refused to show his hands, walked towards his vehicle despite being told to stop, and then "angled towards and reached into his vehicle".^[42] The shooting led to protests in Tulsa. On 22 September, the Tulsa County District Attorney charged Shelby with first-degree manslaughter after the shooting was labeled a homicide. On 17 May 2017, a jury found her not guilty of first-degree manslaughter.^[43]
- 26 April 2017: During the 2017 Venezuelan protests, student Juan Pablo Pernaletе was killed by the impact of a tear gas canister in his chest fired by the National Guard, arriving at the clinic without vital signs.^[44]
- 7 June 2017: During the Venezuelan protests, 17-year-old Neomar Lander is killed after being shot directly with a tear gas canister fired by the Bolivarian National Police. Government sources argue that he died due to a homemade mortar.^[45]
- 19 June 2017: During the Venezuelan protests, 17-year-old Fabián Urbina was killed by a National Guardsman who fired live ammunition at protesters, wounding at least four others.^[46]
- 25 May 2020: George Floyd, 46, was killed by Officer Derek Chauvin in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He was prostrate on the ground, laying face down. The video evidence shows him pleading for his life, while Chauvin's knee remains on his neck for the duration of the video. The death of George Floyd led to protests around the world, and led to many celebrities condemning police brutality. Chauvin was promptly fired by the Minneapolis Police Department and was initially charged with 3rd Degree Murder, and 2nd degree Manslaughter. The charge of 2nd Degree Murder was later added. The other three officers that were near Floyd at the time and did not help Floyd were charged with aiding and abetting the killing.^[47]
- On the night of June 12, 2020, Rayshard Brooks, a 27-year-old African American man, was shot and killed by Atlanta Police Department officer Garrett Rolfe. Killing of Rayshard Brooks Date June 12, 2020 Time 11:23 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (UTC-4) Location Atlanta, Georgia, US Coordinates 33°43'18.4"N 84°23'31.3"W Type Shooting Officer Devin Brosnan responded to a complaint that Brooks was asleep in a car blocking a restaurant drive-through lane; Rolfe arrived after Brosnan radioed for assistance some minutes later. After a breathalyzer exam indicated that Brooks's blood-alcohol content was above the legal limit for driving, Rolfe and Brosnan began to handcuff Brooks. Brooks scuffled with the officers, got hold of Brosnan's taser, punched Rolfe, and ran. With Rolfe pursuing him, Brooks turned to fire the taser toward Rolfe, who then shot Brooks

twice in the back; a third shot struck an occupied car. Brooks died after surgery. Footage of the incident from the officers' bodycams, from a witness's phone, and from the restaurant's security system were widely broadcast. Rolfe was fired, Brosnan was placed on administrative duty, and police chief Erika Shields resigned the following day. Based on these videos and witness reports, prosecutors claim that after Brooks was shot, Rolfe kicked Brooks and Brosnan stood on his shoulder. Rolfe has been charged with felony murder and ten other offenses, Brosnan with aggravated assault and two counts of violation of oath.

See also

- [Gypsy cop](#)
- [Police brutality in the United States](#)

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