

3. Number of death sentences in High Courts (Since 1956)

The following statistics are based on the "Annual Report of Judicial Statistics ('Shiho-Tokei') ('司法統計年報,' from FY1956 to the present)", with the exception of the data about "Results of the High Courts in case of death penalty sentenced by trial courts" in FY1973 and FY1975-1984, which were provided by Mizuho Fukushima, member of the House of Representatives.

Hyphens ("-") mean that no statistical data exists.

YEAR		Total number of sentences in High Courts	Outcomes of High Court proceedings in cases of death sentences imposed by trial courts							High Court substituted lesser sentence of trial court with death penalty	Sources: Annual Report of Judicial Statistics ('Shiho-Tokei') II (Criminal)	
			Number of appeals	Trial court judgments reversed			Appeal dismissed	Indictment dismissed	Appeal withdrawn			
				High Court imposed sentence		High Court remanded/tr ansferred						
				death penalty	sentence other than death penalty							
Showa 31	1956	-	-		7 (life imprisonment)		-	-	-	5	-	1956 vol.2, p.408-9, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 19)
Showa 32	1957	-	-		5 (life imprisonment)		-	-	-	5	-	1957 vol.2, p.372-73, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 19)
Showa 33	1958	16	33		15 (14 life imprisonment, 1 indefinite term 10 to 15 years)		15		3	1	1958 vol.2, p.294-5, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 23)	1958 vol.2, p.288-9, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 19)
Showa 34	1959	29	35		5 (1 life imprisonment, four acquitted)		29		1		1959 vol.2, p.294-5, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 23)	1959 vol.2, p.288-9, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 19)
Showa 35	1960	18	19		2 (life imprisonment)		16		1	2	1960 vol.2, p.298-9, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 23)	1960 vol.2, p.292-3, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 19)
Showa 36	1961	11	21		11 (5 life imprisonment, 1 indefinite term 6 months to one year and five acquittals)		8	1	1	3	1961 vol.2, p.298-9, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 23)	1961 vol.2, p.292-3, Cases of Criminal Appeals(Table 19)
Showa 37	1962	17	22		6 (life imprisonment)		15		1	2	1962 vol.2, Table 93, p.300-1	1962 vol.2, Table 87, p.294-5
Showa 38	1963	7	15		7 (6 life imprisonment, 1 indefinite term 10 to 15 years)		7		1		1963 vol.2, Table 86, p.268-9	1963 vol.2, Table 82, p.264-5
Showa 39	1964	9	11		3 (life imprisonment)		7	1		2	1964 vol.2, Table 86, p.268-9	1964 vol.2, Table 82, p.264-5
Showa 40	1965	12	13	2	3 (life imprisonment)		8			2	1965, Table 80, p.558-9	1965, Table 78, p.554-5
Showa 41	1966	17	19		5 (3 life imprisonment, 1 indefinite term 15 to 20 years, 1 for 10 to 15 years)		14			3	1966, Table 81, p.558-9	1966, Table 77, p.554-5
Showa 42	1967	9	13		3 (life imprisonment)		9		1		1967, Table 80, p.546-7	1967, Table 76, p.542-3
Showa 43	1968	10	14		4 (life imprisonment)		9		1	1	1968, Table 80, p.534-5	1968, Table 76, p.530-1
Showa 44	1969	16	14	1	2 (1 life imprisonment, 1 fine)		10		1	5	1969, Table 80, p.546-7	1969, Table 76, p.542-3
Showa 45	1970	6	8		1 (life imprisonment)		5		2	1	1970, Table 80, p.544-5	1970, Table 76, p.540-1
Showa 46	1971	5	7		2 (life imprisonment)		3		1	2	1971, Table 80, p.548-9	1971, Table 76, p.544-5
Showa 47	1972	6	10		3 (2 life imprisonment, 1 indefinite term 6 months to one year)		6		1		1972, Table 80, p.572-3	1972, Table 76, p.568-9
Showa 48	1973	4	-	1	2 (life imprisonment)		1	-	-	2	Based on sources obtained from the Supreme Court by Mizuho Fukushima, Member of the House of Representatives	1973, Table 75, p.580-1
Showa 49	1974	-	-		1 (life imprisonment)		-	-	-			1974, Table 75, p.578-9
Showa 50	1975	3	-		2 (life imprisonment)		3	-	-			1975, Table 65, p.350-1
Showa 51	1976	4	-		1 (life imprisonment)		4	-	-			1976, Table 65, p.360-1
Showa 52	1977	6	-		1 (life imprisonment)		5	-	-	1		1977, Table 65, p.350-1
Showa 53	1978	2	-		1 (life imprisonment)		1	-	-	1		1978, Table 63, p.342-3
Showa 54	1979	3	-		2 (life imprisonment)		2	-	-	1		1979, Table 63, p.342-3
Showa 55	1980	5	-		1 (indefinite term 15 to 20 years)		4	-	-	1		1980, Table 63, p.342-3
Showa 56	1981	2	-		2 (life imprisonment)		2	-	-			1981, Table 63, p.342-3
Showa 57	1982	9	-		3 (life imprisonment)		9	-	-			1982, Table 63, p.342-3
Showa 58	1983	4	-		2 (life imprisonment)		3	-	-	1		1983, Table 63, p.338-9

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YEAR		Total number of sentences in High Courts	Outcomes of High Court proceedings in cases of death sentences imposed by trial courts							High Court substituted lesser sentence of trial court with death penalty	Sources: Annual Report of Judicial Statistics ('Shiho-Tokei') II (Criminal)	
			Number of appeals	Trial court judgments reversed			Appeal dismissed	Indictment dismissed	Appeal withdrawn			
				High Court imposed sentence		High Court remanded/tr ansferred						
				death penalty	sentence other than death penalty							
Showa 59	1984	6	-		1 (life imprisonment)		6	-	-			1984, Table 63, p.338-9
Showa 60	1985	5	6		2 (life imprisonment)		4			1	1985, Table 55, p.318-9	1985, Table 64, p.340-1
Showa 61	1986	7	8		1 (life imprisonment)		7				1986, Table 55, p.318-9	1986, Table 64, p.340-1
Showa 62	1987	8	8				8				1987, Table 55, p.318-9	1987, Table 64, p.340-1
Showa 63	1988	4	6				4		2		1988, Table 55, p.318-9	1988, Table 64, p.340-1
Showa 64 / Heisei 1	1989	5	4				4			1	1989, Table 55, p.330-1	1989, Table 64, p.352-3
Heisei 2	1990	3	6		3 (2 life imprisonment, 1 indefinite term 15 to 20 years)		3				1990, Table 55, p.330-1	1990, Table 64, p.352-3
Heisei 3	1991	4	5		1 (life imprisonment)		4				1991, Table 55, p.338-9	1991, Table 64, p.360-1
Heisei 4	1992	4	4				3		1	1	1992, Table 55, p.338-9	1992, Table 64, p.360-1
Heisei 5	1993	1	2		1 (life imprisonment)		1				1993, Table 55, p.340-1	1993, Table 64, p.362-3
Heisei 6	1994	4	4				4				1994, Table 55, p.340-1	1994, Table 64, p.362-3
Heisei 7	1995	4	5		2 (life imprisonment)		3			1	1995, Table 55, p.340-1	1995, Table 64, p.362-3
Heisei 8	1996	3	4		1 (life imprisonment)		3				1996, Table 55, p.340-1	1996, Table 64, p.362-3
Heisei 9	1997	2	5		1 (life imprisonment)	2	2				1997, Table 55, p.340-1	1997, Table 64, p.362-3
Heisei 10	1998	7	7				7				1998, Table 55, p.340-1	1998, Table 64, p.362-3
Heisei 11	1999	4	3				3			1	1999, Table 49 , p.88-89	1999, Table 58, p.108-9
Heisei 12	2000	6	5				4	1		2	2000, Table49 p.88-89	2000, Table58 p.108-9
Heisei 13	2001	16	15	1	1 (life imprisonment)		12	1		3	2001, Table49 p.88-89	2001, Table58 p.108-9
Heisei 14	2002	4	4				3	1		1	2002, Table49 p.88-89	2002, Table58 p.108-9
Heisei 15	2003	17	21		3 (life imprisonment)		17		1		2003, Table49 p.88-89	2003, Table58 p.108-9
Heisei 16	2004	15	13		1 (life imprisonment)		11		1	4	2004, Table49 p.88-89	2004, Table58 p.108-9
Heisei 17	2005	15	15	1	2 (life imprisonment)		11		1	3	2005, Table50 p.90-91	2005, Table59 p.110-1
Heisei 18	2006	15	16		2 (life imprisonment)		13 (1decision)	1		3	2006, Table58 p.102-3	2006, Table67 p.122-3
Heisei 19	2007	14	19		1 (life imprisonment)		13		5	1	2007, Table58 p.102-3	2007, Table67 p.122-3
Heisei 20	2008	14	12				12			2	2008, Table58 p.102-3	2008, Table67 p.122-3
Heisei 21	2009	9	9		1 (life imprisonment)		7	1		2	2009, Table63 p.108-9	2009, Table72 p.128-9
Heisei 22	2010	3	2				2			1	2010, Table63 p.108-9	2010, Table75 p.134-5
Heisei 23	2011	2	4		1 (life imprisonment)		2		1		2011, Table63 p.108-9	2011, Table75 p.134-5
Heisei 24	2012	5	5				5				2012, Table63 p.108-9	2012, Table75 p.134-5
Heisei 25	2013	3	6		2 (life imprisonment)		3		1		2013, Table63 p.108-9	2013, Table75 p.134-5
Heisei 26	2014	8	9		1 (life imprisonment)		8				2014, Table63 p.108-9	2014, Table75 p.134-5
Heisei 27	2015	1	1				1				2015, Table63 p.108-9	2015, Table75 p.134-5
Heisei 28	2016	4	4				4				2016, Table63 p.108-9	2016, Table75 p.134-5
Heisei 29	2017	0	2		2 (life imprisonment)						2017, Table63 p.108-9	2017, Table75 p.134-5
Heisei 30	2018	2	2				2				2018, Table63	2018, Table75
Heisei 31 / Reiwa 1	2019	3	5		1 (life imprisonment)		3		1		2019, Table63	2019, Table75
Reiwa 2	2020	0	2		1 (life imprisonment)				1		2020, Table63	2020, Table75
Reiwa 3	2021	2	2				2				2021, Table63	2021, Table75
Reiwa 4	2022	1	2				1		1		2022, Table63	2022, Table75
Reiwa 5	2023	1	2		1 (life imprisonment)		1				2023, Table63	2023, Table75
Reiwa 6	2024	0	3		1 (life imprisonment)			1	1		2024, Table63	2024, Table75

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			Number of appeals	Trial court judgments reversed			Appeal dismissed	Indictment dismissed	Appeal withdrawn		Results of the High Courts in case of death penalty sentenced by trial courts	Reversed by High Courts and imposed the death penalty
				High Court imposed sentence		High Court remanded/tr ansferred						
				death penalty	sentence other than death penalty							
Reiwa 7	2025	2	3				2		1		2025. Table63	2025. Table75

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The statistics on the number of death sentences issued by the High Courts and the Supreme Court, as compiled by the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, "Considering the Abolition of the Death Penalty(<https://www.nichibenren.or.jp/activity/criminal/deathpenalty/shiryu.html#data02.1>)", were calculated using the following formulas:

[total sentences in High Courts] = [dismissal] + [reversed and rendered] + [withdrawal]

[total sentences in Supreme Court] = [dismissal] + [reversed and rendered] + [withdrawal]

We calculated these same statistics by using the following formulas:

[total sentences in High Courts] = [dismissal] + [reversed and rendered]

[total sentences in Supreme Court] = [dismissal] + [reversed and rendered]

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