

Legalizing Marijuana
Pros and Cons
OLLI October 2013

None

DRUG

- A **drug** may have [medicinal](#), [intoxicating](#), [performance enhancing](#), or other effects when taken or put into a [human body](#) and is not considered a [food](#)..
- [Coffee](#) is the most widely used [psychoactive drug](#) beverage in the world. In 1999, the average consumption of coffee was 3.5 cups per day per U.S. citizen.

[Wine](#) is a common [alcoholic beverage](#).

What is considered a drug varies between [cultures](#), and distinctions between drugs and foods and between kinds of drug are enshrined in [laws](#) which vary between [jurisdictions](#) and aim to restrict or prevent drug use. Even within a jurisdiction, however, the status of a substance may be uncertain or contested with respect to both whether it is a drug and how it should be classified if at all. There is no single, precise definition, as there are different meanings in [drug control law](#), [government regulations](#), [medicine](#), and colloquial usage.

Marijuana

Marijuana is the most commonly used recreational drug around the world, only behind alcohol, caffeine, and tobacco.

It is a dry, shredded green and brown mix of flowers, stems, seeds, and leaves derived from the plant *Cannabis sativa* and *indica*.

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There are 483 identifiable chemical constituents known to exist in the cannabis plant, and at least 85 different cannabinoids have been isolated from the plant. The two cannabinoids usually produced in greatest abundance are cannabidiol ([CBD](#)) and/or Δ^9 -tetrahydrocannabinol ([THC](#)), but only THC is psychoactive. **Cannabinoids** are a class of diverse [chemical compounds](#) that activate [cannabinoid receptors](#) on cells that repress neurotransmitter release in the brain. These receptor proteins include the [endocannabinoids](#) (produced naturally in the body by humans and animals), the phytocannabinoids (found in [cannabis](#) and some other plants), and [synthetic cannabinoids](#) (produced chemically by humans).

Time Magazine June 2012 Marijuana boasts somewhere between 119 million and 224 million users in the adult population of the world (18 or older). And there are no signs to indicate the popularity of marijuana will fall anytime soon. Cannabis is consumed in some fashion in all countries, the report says, and it is grown in most. Though the use of the drug is stabilizing in North America, and Oceania, smoking pot is on the rise in West and Central Africa, Southern Africa, South Asia and Central Asia. In 2010, marijuana use was most prevalent in Australia and New Zealand. The U.S. and Canada came in second, followed by Spain, France, Italy, and the Czech Republic. Nigeria, Zambia, and Madagascar were tied for fourth place.

Colorado Marijuana Laws

- Recreational: Legal to possess under 1 oz. age 21 and older. Legal to consume in private residence, not in public. Legal to sell, provided store has obtained permit to do so. Retail sales start early in 2014. Private non-commercial cultivation of cannabis is legal up to six plants per person.
- Medical: Legal since 11/2000. Use with written medical consent. No more than six plants, only three flowering. May get supply from dispensary.

Consumption is permitted in a manner similar to alcohol, with equivalent offenses for driving.

Dispensaries offer a range of cannabis strains with different qualities, as well as various “edible” or food products that contain cannabis. Certain dispensaries also offer patients seeds and “clones” for those who want to grow their own medicine.

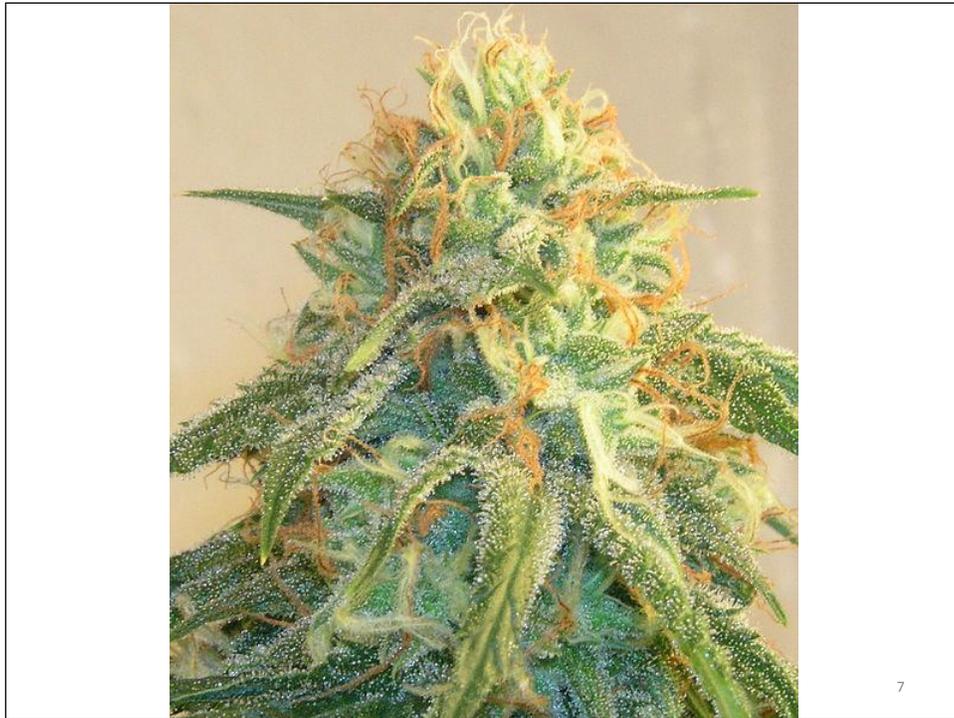


Marijuana Dispensary



[Skywalker OG Kush](#)

Traits: [dank smell](#), [Good For Insomnia](#), [Pain Relief](#), [Relaxing](#), and [Stress](#). [Indica](#), [kush smell](#), [kush taste](#), [light green](#), [lots of crystals](#), [Night Time Use](#), [orange hairs](#), [strong smell](#), [taste great](#), [Very Potent](#). Has a higher cannabinoid (CBD) content than sativa hence is milder or more mellow. Produces more of a “stoned” feeling or a “body buzz” and good for pain relief, insomnia, and tends to mitigate the anxiogenic effect of THC. Due to the relaxing nature of *indicas*, they are best used for non-active times of the day and before bed.



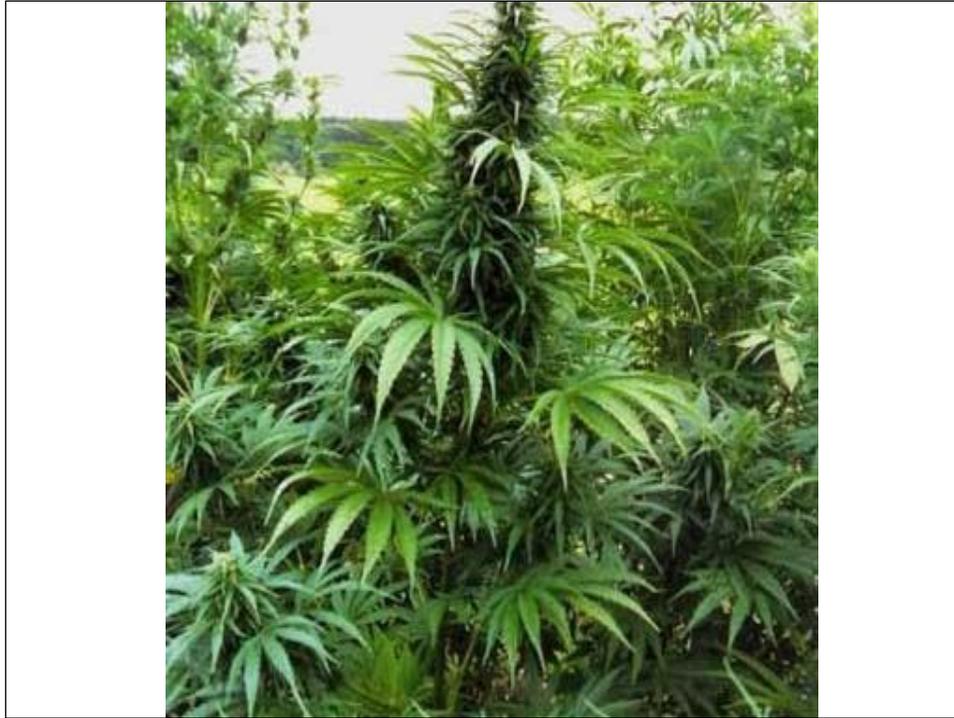
Marijuana (*Cannabis sp.*) is an example of a plant that has unisexual flowers and is dioecious (Greek for two households). Marijuana plants with female flowers are far more valuable than those with male flowers. Male flowers have to be present but if female Cannabis flowers are sex starved they put out extra large growth. Photo is Cannabis flower with visible trichomes. These are the resinous growths or glistening translucent glands protruding from the buds, leaves and just about everywhere else on the plant. The sticky coating of trichomes is the home to the active ingredients in cannabis – the stuff that gets you high and has all the medical benefits – tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), cannabidiol (CBD) and other cannabinoids. Trichomes (Greek “growth of hair”) protects the plant from its environment. It protects against offensive insects, makes the plant less palatable to hungry animals, inhibit the growth of some types of fungus, insulates from high wind and low humidity and acts as a sunscreen.

Marijuana has a distinctive smell that is similar to that of the plant of origin, Cannabis plants parts have a strong sweet and fruity odor, particularly the flowers, but the smoke is mild.



Close-up of flower with trichomes. Preparations of flowers (marijuana) and leaves and preparations derived from resinous extract ([hashish](#)) are consumed by smoking, vaporizing and oral ingestion. Historically, [tinctures](#), [teas](#), and [ointments](#) have also been common preparations. Some therapeutic uses: Reduces depression, elevates mood; Relieves headaches and migraines; Relieves menstrual cramps; Energizes and stimulates; Increases focus and creativity; Reduces nausea; and Stimulates appetite. The primary effects of *sativa* are on the mind and emotions. These benefits can be particularly helpful for the psychological aspects of many illnesses, giving people an increased sense of well-being. Due to the stimulating nature of *sativa*, they are generally better for daytime use.

The [flowers](#) of the female plant can produce hundreds of seeds. All known strains of cannabis are wind pollinated.

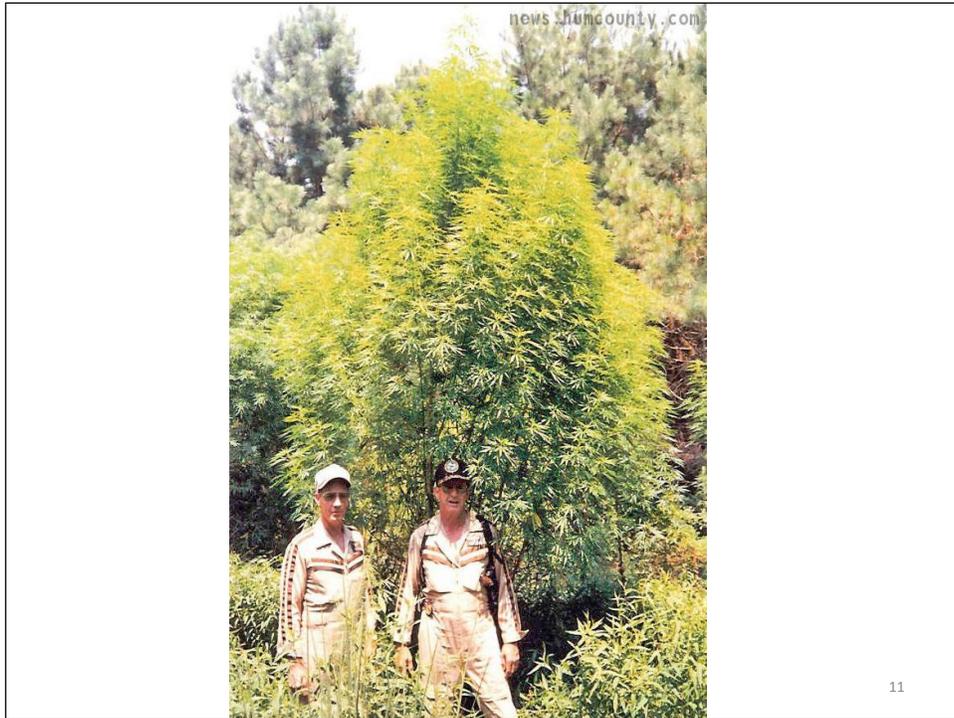


Cannabis Indica plant. **Cultivation** Broad-leafed *Cannabis indica* plants originating in India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Traditionally were cultivated for the production of [hashish](#). Because of the often harsh and variable (extremely cold winters, and warm summers) climate of those parts, *C. indica* is well-suited for cultivation in temperate climates. Indica plants are normally shorter and stockier than sativa. They have wide, deeply serrated leaves and a compact and dense flower cluster. Generally better for indoor growing because they don't grow as tall.



Indoor marijuana plants. Indica is short, conical, densely branched. Origins in the Hindu Kush mountain range of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Well suited to temperate climates. Short dense plants, with broad leaves. After flowering starts they will be mature in 6 to 8 weeks. Users report more of a “stoned” feeling and less of a “high” compared to Sativa. Induces less anxiety than sativa so produces a sedative effects and preferred for night time use as medical cannabis and are best used at relaxing non-active times of day and before bed. Higher rate of CBD to THC. Yield two to five ounces or more dried marijuana per plant indoors. Real prize is outdoor plants that will yield two pounds with some reports of up to five pounds per plant.

Price a few years ago would have been higher. Retail value of product much higher.



Outdoor giant sativa marijuana plant. People have cultivated this herb throughout recorded history as a source of industrial fiber (hemp), seed oil, food, recreation, religious and spiritual enlightenment, and medicine. Used most commonly for hempseed oil which can be used for cooking, lamps, lacquers, or paints. Also as caged bird seed oil.

Hemp is a commonly used term for varieties of the [Cannabis](#) plant and its products, which include fiber, oil, and seed. In many countries regulatory limits for concentrations of psychoactive drug compounds ([THC](#)) in hemp encourage the use of strains of the plant which are bred for low [tetrahydrocannabinol](#) (THC) content or otherwise have the THC removed.^[1] Hemp is refined into products like hemp seed foods, hemp oil, wax, resin, rope, cloth, pulp, paper, and fuel.



Sativa is the most common and potent Cannabis. Due to the stimulating nature of *sativas*, they are generally better for daytime use. The primary effects of *sativas* are on the mind and emotions. These benefits can be particularly helpful for the psychological aspects of many illnesses, giving people an increased sense of well-being. Weed Farmer indicates sativa....higher THC than CBD equals cerebral, soaring type of high, more energetic Yield is usually lower than Indica, but is very potent. eg: Sativa grow taller, laxly branched and have a longer flowering period, so they are better suited for outdoors and do well in warm lowland areas. Flowers for outdoor plants bloom from late summer to mid-fall.

Other sources: A *Cannabis* plant requires more than 12–13 hours of light per day to stay vegetative. Flowering usually occurs when darkness equals at least 12 hours per day.

The flowering cycle for sativa's can last anywhere between 10 and 16 depending on the strain and environmental conditions



Marijuana (i.e. weed and many other variations) consists of the flowers (and to a lesser extent the leaves, stems, and seeds) of cannabis sativa and indica.

A joint prior to rolling with a paper "roach" at left.

Joint is a [slang term](#) for a [cigarette](#) rolled using [cannabis](#) . [Rolling papers](#) are the most common rolling medium among industrialized countries. There are all sorts of variations over the world on joints.

The perfect joint website suggests:

- A joint consists of weed and tobacco
- Mixture is 1/3 weed and 2/3 tobacco
- You do not put weed in a cigar!!!
- You do not make a weed only cigarette and smoke it till the end!



500-mg. joint with European-style "[roach](#)".

A joint can range in size, typically containing between 0.25 to 1 [gram](#) net weight of cannabis (depending on whether tobacco is used in the rolling process. There are all sorts of variations on the rolling paper on colors and types of paper, use of a filter, etc.

Weed Prices \$ Per Ounce Street High and Medium Quality 9/2013

• CALIFORNIA	251	193	• Alexandria M 220 oz. 27 th
• Texas	346	232	• Fairfax H 60 eighth 28 th
• Colorado	239	199	• Fairfax H 300 oz. M 28 th
• Washington	239	194	• Fredericksburg H 80 quarter
• New York	356	271	• Charlottesville M 200 half
• Illinois	364	287	• Manassas M 100 quarter
• Virginia	379	285	• Blacksburg H 50 eighth 28
• Florida	309	220	• Reston H 50 eighth 27 th
• Canada	226	184	

Source www.priceofweed.com.

The right column: Marijuana Prices in the USA compiled by Clint is more general but of interest. Mids (ok weed/regular) dime \$10, dub bag \$20, eighth \$30, quarter \$50, half ounce \$100, ounce \$150, quarter pound \$550, half pound \$1,000, pound \$1,500. High Quality (good weed/exotic) easily can run 50% higher.

Wholesale Marijuana Prices

- Implications: Current retail street prices imply weed per pound is worth \$3,824 to \$6,064. More realistically \$3,000 to \$5,000. Medium quality roughly \$2,000 to \$3,500.
- Wholesale prices vary widely depending on quality and location. Columbia S.A. \$180 per pound, US market can vary widely depending on quality by a factor of 10. Retail prices seem to be the best indicator.

Domestic production US all states with CA, OR, WA, TN, KY, WVA larger production. Imports Mexico (two crops per year some areas, Columbia, Peru, Jamaica significant income for small farmers. Canada has very high quality B.C. Bud, Quebec Gold, etc. Trafficking involves bulk movements from suppliers i.e. through Central America and Mexico, shifting to a micro process of breaking wholesale shipments into smaller parcels as a hedge against interdiction, breaking packages into small units for distributors.

Smuggling using tunnels; traversing borders on foot, dirt bikes, ATV's, and pack mules; fording the Rio Grande and cutting fences, using dense vegetation as dead drops, flying or helicoptering across borders, concealing in private vehicles, bribing border officials, hiding on cross border trains, tractor trailers, boats on coasts, human mules in luggage and shipping by mail.

Use networks of safe houses for distribution or local gangs in Hub cities as middlemen and retail distributors and massive numbers of expendable, low skilled dealers for retailing. Effective dealer might load 50 baggies daily and make \$3,000 of deliveries.

All steps in system minimize face-to-face and electronic communications.

Money flows in reverse up front with payoffs due to margin or flat fee based on successful movement.

Cost of a Joint of Marijuana

- An ounce equals 28.349 grams. This will provide enough marijuana for 28 to 57 joints of 1 gram to 500 mg.
- With high quality weed ranging from \$239 (CO & WA) to \$379 (VA) an ounce, a high quality joint should cost at least \$4.19 to \$13.54. .
- Adding on 21 cents for filters and paper the per joint cost will range from \$4.40 to 13.75 assuming you roll your own. Tobacco may be used in the rolling process. Joints fully ready to smoke are often \$20.00.
- Currently one firm is advertising Colorado medical marijuana indica joints (Grand Daddy Purple) in a pack of five for \$59.95 or \$12.00 each per joint.

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Marijuana prices are declining with the increase in the number of states approving the use of medical marijuana and with Washington and Colorado legalizing marijuana at the state level. Implicitly this should also mean less emphasis on marijuana by local law enforcement. Lower returns for growers or smugglers.

Get High for Free

If pot were truly legal, joints would cost only a few cents

- Legal Pot would be amazingly cheap. Growth, distribution and marketing would be entirely different.
- You have a nonperishable crop like wheat or lentils. America's farmlands are some of the most productive in the world, thanks to large scale production technology.
- For hemp, a non-drug form of sativa, production costs in Canada are now \$500 per acre. So mid-grade commercial weed (cannabis that is 80 percent of the US market) could be as low as 20 cents per pound of smokeable material or joints could cost 25 cents. Joints could be given away for advertising like small packs of pretzels or peanuts.

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Matthew Yglesias. Slate. Published by the Slate Group, a Division of the Washington Post Company. January 2013.

Get High for Free 2

- In practice recreational marijuana plants would likely be grown from transplanted clones like cherry tomatoes or asparagus. So costs would be \$5,000 to \$20,000 per acre. Costs of legal marijuana would be more like tea or tobacco or a few cents per joint.
- Radically lowering the price to say \$1.00 per joint plus imposing a 20% tax would make pot the cheapest intoxicant on the market, absolutely blowing beer and liquor out of the water.

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Ibid.



Marijuana seedlings. Before growing marijuana think about growing medium, warmth, light, water, nutrients, germinating, seeding phase, sexing, training (sizing), topping, pinching or cropping, low stress training or manipulation, pre-flowering, flowering, quality, camouflaging, housing, house damage, harvesting, drying, curing, pests, and preparing product.

Research by Caulkins published by the Rand Policy Research Center WR-764-RC, July 2010 estimates production costs per pound of \$200-\$400 per pound in a 1500 square foot residential house and \$70 to \$215 per pound for 1 acre 50% covered with greenhouses. Drying and processing costs were estimated at \$80 to \$200 per pound to as low as \$20 to \$35 pound. In summary legal production and processing costs per pound would be slightly less or equal to current prices per ounce of marijuana in California of \$251. The imposition of excise taxes of 15% to 20% of sales are not included.



Drug Money(?) in home of Zhenli YeGon 207 million dollars, 18 million Mexican pesos, Euros, Hong Kong dollars, gold coins, jewels, photo 2007
Drug distribution: Basically a black market system.

World estimates are 1 to 1.5 percent of world trade?

Potential Earnings and Savings with Legalizing Marijuana

- Nationally \$26 billion federal and state taxes. Also several billion savings from prohibition and substantially lowering incarceration of users and dealers.
- Lowering incarceration results in income taxes and reductions in transfer payments to marijuana users and their families. Reductions in costs of support for disruption of families and support of an average of 1.1 children per marijuana offender. Increased stability for communities.
- Colorado taxes \$90 to \$210 million excise and sales taxes.
- Washington \$564 million taxes.
- Canada \$6.2 billion plus savings for foregoing the costs of enforcement.
- New York City estimate \$400 million plus \$31 million thru eliminating misdemeanor arrests (stop and frisk, etc.).

Various studies, plenty of assumptions, and lots of unknowns in estimates.

IS MARIJUANA DANGEROUS?

Marijuana Laws Virginia

Cultivation Any amount felony 5 - 30 years \$10,000

Sale 1/2 oz or less misdemeanor 1 year \$2,500

1/2 oz to 5 lbs felony 1 - 10 years \$2,500

5 lbs to 100 kg felony 5 - 30 years \$2,500

To a minor felony 10 - 50 years \$100,000

Within 1,000 feet of a school or other specified areas felony 1 - 5 years \$100,000

Transport 5 lbs or more into state with intent to sell felony 3 years MMS* - 40 years
\$1,000,000

Substances

- The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) website provides information on a list of 311 drugs The Controlled Substances Act (CSA) of 1970 regulates five classes of drugs: Narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, and antibiotic steroids but excludes alcohol and tobacco.
- Marijuana is a Schedule I Drug. A Schedule I Drug has high potential for abuse and no currently accepted medical use.

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DEA Drugs of Abuse

Schafer Commission

- National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse ("the Shafer Commission"), appointed by President Nixon (1970?).
- Report recommended decriminalization, ending prohibition and utilizing other methods to discourage use, 1972 and 1973, reports.
- Ultimately, nothing became of the report, as neither the Nixon Administration nor Congress took any further action. As a result, [marijuana remains a Class I substance](#) under the Controlled Substances Act.
- President Nixon needed a campaign at the time and "The War on Drugs" evolved..

While the Controlled Substances Act was being drafted in a House committee in 1970, Assistant Secretary of Health [Roger O. Egeberg](#) had recommended that marijuana temporarily be placed in Schedule I, the most restrictive category of drugs, pending the Commission's report. The Act created a "Presidential Commission" to report on the effects of marijuana and other drugs and recommend appropriate drug policies. The Commission was headed by Governor Raymond Schafer of Pennsylvania, a former prosecutor known as a "law and order" governor to head the commission.

Nixon linked marijuana to the counter culture wars of the times.

Nixon made clear several times that he wanted a report which supported his views and 'tough on crime' policies, no matter what the facts might be. **"I want a Goddam strong statement about marijuana. Can I get that out of this sonofabitching, uh Domestic Council? ...I mean one on marijuana that just tears the ass out of them"** (Conversation with Bob Haldeman May 26, 1972).

Highlights of Nixon comments on marijuana:

Jews and marijuana: That's a funny thing, every one of the bastards that are out for legalizing marijuana are Jewish. I suppose it's because most of them are psychiatrists.

"You see, homosexuality, dope, immorality in general. These are the enemies of strong societies. That's why the Communists and the left-wingers are pushing the stuff, they're trying to destroy us."

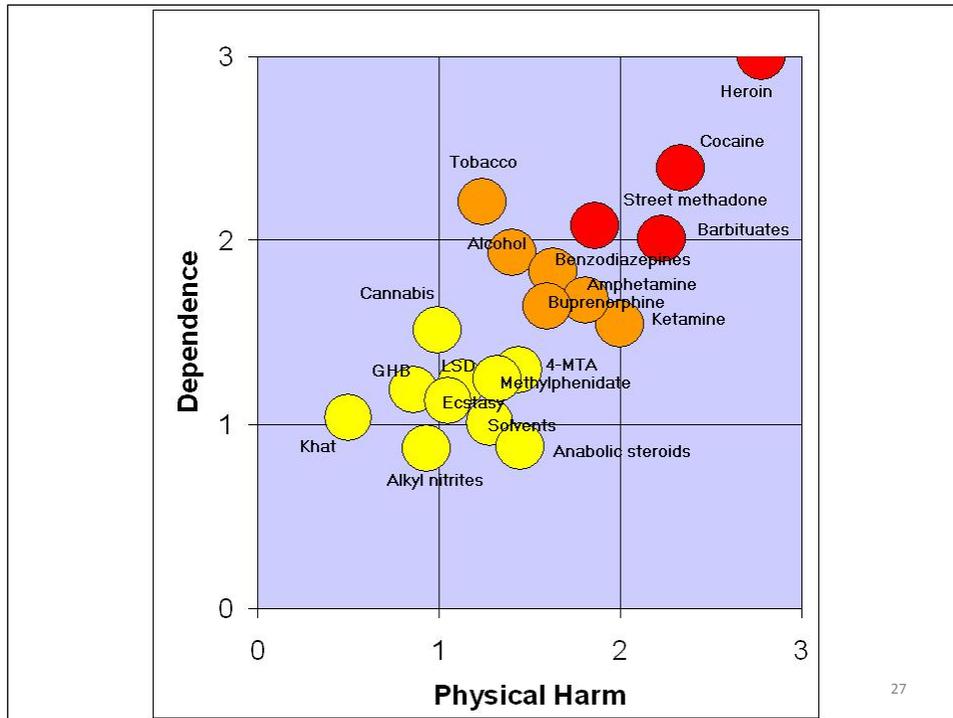
Marijuana compared to alcohol: marijuana consumers smoke "to get high" while "a person drinks to have fun." "At least with liquor I don't lose motivation."

Is Marijuana Dangerous?

- Development of a Rational Scale to Assess the Harm of Drugs of Potential Misuse: Article in *The Lancet* 2007 United Kingdom.
- An article by Blakemore and Nutt, et. al., presents a scale of harms based on three scales – **physical harm, dependence and social harm** – which were independently assessed by two groups of experts from the fields of chemistry, pharmacology, forensic science, psychiatry and other medical specialties 2007.
- Substances with **high physical harm** scores include **heroin, cocaine, barbiturates, ketamine, street methadone and amphetamines**.
- Substances with a **high dependence or addictiveness** include **heroin, cocaine, tobacco, street methadone, barbiturates, alcohol** and benzodiazepines (benzo).

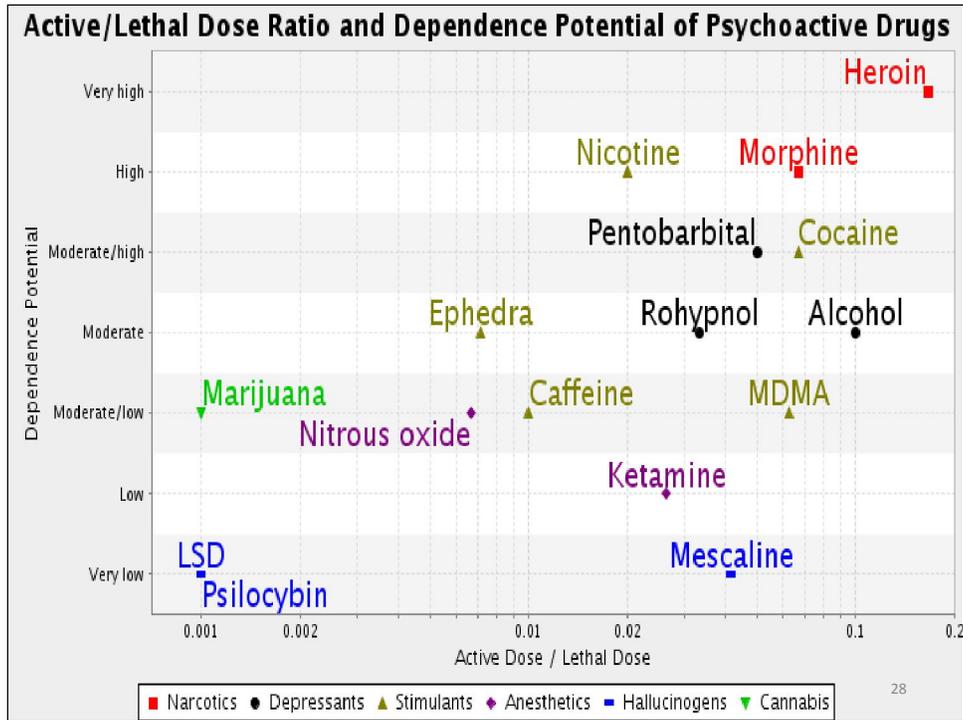
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British Study



A rational scale to assess the harm of drugs. Data source is the March 24, 2007 article: Nutt, David, Leslie A King, William Saulsbury, Colin Blakemore. "Development of a rational scale to assess the harm of drugs of potential misuse" *The Lancet* 2007; 369:1047-1053. ([PMID 17382831](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/17382831/));

The data in the paper is obtained solely from questionnaire results obtained from two groups of people: the first comprised people from the UK national group of consultant psychiatrists who were on the Royal College of Psychiatrists' register as specialists in addiction, while the second comprised of people with experience in one of the many areas of addiction, ranging from chemistry, pharmacology, and forensic science, through psychiatry and other medical specialties, including epidemiology, as well as the legal and police services; the experts are not named and were chosen by the authors. This is a tertiary source (see [Wikipedia policy on primary, secondary, tertiary sources](#)) as it summarizes experts' opinions on the matter (which are secondary sources) without any direct references to primary sources. The data was first reported in appendix 14 of "Drug classification: making a hash of it?"



Wikimedia Commons. Drug danger and dependence. File April 2010 based on article by R.S. Gable (2006) Acute toxicity of drugs versus regulatory status.

Class I Heroin (poppy), LSD, Psilocybin, Mescaline and Marijuana (Cannabis). Class II (some medical use) Cocaine (coca leaves), Methamphetamine, Metadone, Oxycodone, and Opium. Class III Ketamine, Class IV Rohypnol (benzodiazepine).

The Truth About Marijuana

- Short-term effects: sensory distortion, panic, anxiety, poor coordination of movement, lowered reaction time, after an initial “up” the user feels sleepy or depressed, increased heartbeat (and the risk of heart attack).

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Source: Drug Free World

The Truth About Marijuana 2

- Long-term effects: Reduced resistance to common illnesses (colds, bronchitis, etc.); suppression of the immune system; growth disorders; increase of abnormally structured cells in the body; reduction of male sex hormones; rapid destruction of lung fibers and lesions (injuries) to the brain could be permanent; reduced sexual capacity; study difficulties: reduced ability to learn and retain information and apathy.

Source: Drug Free World

Marijuana Overview

- Cannabis is a popular recreational drug around the world, only behind [alcohol](#), [caffeine](#) and [tobacco](#). In the United States alone, it is believed that over 100 million Americans have tried Cannabis, with 25 million Americans having used it within the past year.

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Virginia roughly 2.6 percent of US population. Implies 65,000 users in the past year or 8,000 plus in Fairfax County.

The War on Drugs

- Most parents who support the war on drugs are mainly concerned about their children becoming addicted to drugs rather than simply becoming occasional or modest drug users.
- Yet ironically the war on drugs may increase addiction rates, and it may even increase the number of addicts.

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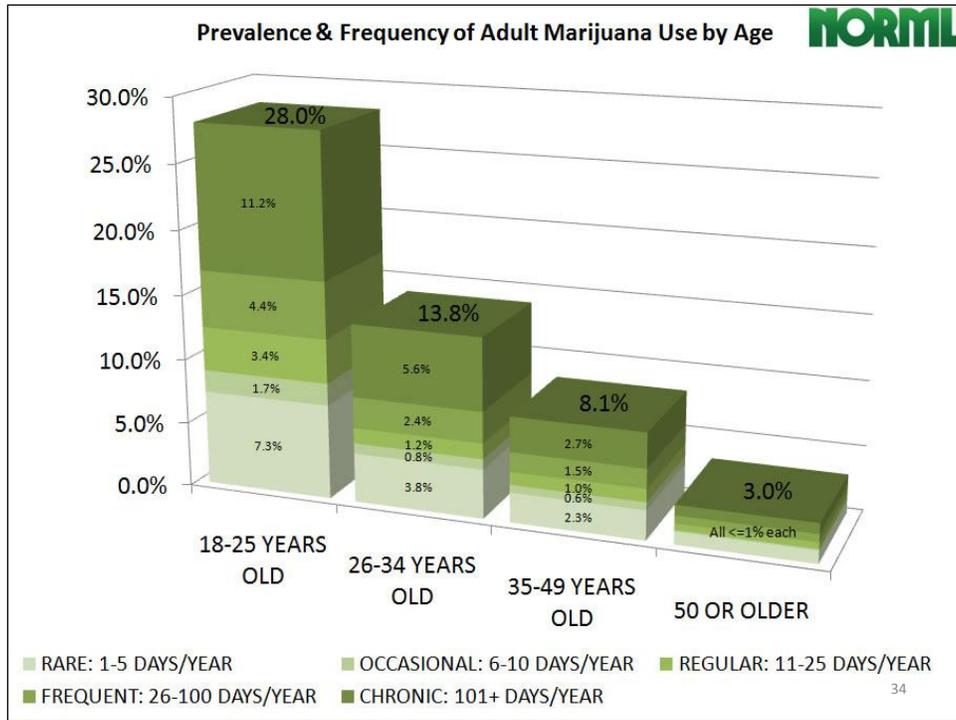
Have We Lost the War on Drugs? Gary S. Becker and Kevin M Murphy. The Saturday Essay. The Wall Street Journal. January 4, 2013.

US Marijuana Use: Adults 18 and Older

- Survey results suggest 100 million adults have used marijuana. Half of those under age 50.
- Whites make up 68 percent of the population. 76 percent of those adults that have used.
- Hispanics or African-Americans 26 percent of the population. 20 percent of those adults that have used.
- Of the 26 million American adults (NSDUH) that have used marijuana this year, past studies suggest 37 percent use marijuana more than 100 times per year.
- This would imply there are an estimated 9.6 million chronic users, with almost half of these aged 18-25.

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Sources: NSDUH (National Survey on Drug Use and Health); Russ Belville, CC Cannabis Culture Magazine, April 2009, based on US Government Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive (SAMHDA).



Facts About Marijuana

US Adults Who Use Marijuana Annually by Age

1. Most marijuana users never use any other illicit drug today. For the large majority, it is a terminus rather than a so-called gateway drug. Alcohol is the gateway.

2. **Most people who use marijuana do so occasionally.** Fewer than 10 percent of those who try marijuana ever meet the clinical criteria for dependence, while 32 percent of tobacco users and 15 percent of alcohol users do.

Marijuana

Claims about **increases in marijuana potency** are vastly overstated and not related to risk of dependence or health impacts. THC in domestically grown marijuana is less than 5%. In the 1980's was 3%. Doctors may legally prescribe Marinol, an FDA-approved pill that contains high levels of THC effective for treatment of nausea, vomiting, and wasting disease. Sativex in Canada has roughly 50% THC.

Marijuana has not been shown to cause **mental illness**. Ingestion may cause panic, anxiety, and paranoia but effects are temporary. Distress may lead to use but not the reverse.

Marijuana use has not been shown to increase risk of **cancer**.

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Drug Policy Alliance. May reduce head and neck cancer. Five year long study has found heavy use marijuana was not associated with lung cancer or upper aerodigestive tract cancers.

Marijuana

Marijuana has been proven helpful for treating the symptoms of a variety of **medical conditions**.

Marijuana use rates in the Netherlands are roughly one-half those in the U.S. despite very different policies of quasi-legalization versus **prohibition**.

Marijuana has not been shown to cause long-term **cognitive impairment**. Short term memory yes depending on strength and amount of use., long term permanent - lack of evidence.

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Drug Policy Alliance 6. **Reducing cancer chemotherapy nausea, stimulating appetite in HIV or AIDS patients including cachexia (wasting and malnutrition), reducing intraocular pressure in people with glaucoma, and reducing muscle spasticity in patients with neurological disorders (epilepsy and seizures)**. Critics argue that one of the most pervasive drug scandals in the United States is the epidemic of under-treatment of pain. "Addiction" to (i.e., dependence on) opiates among the terminally ill is the appropriate course of medical treatment.

Smoking marijuana to ease the nausea of chemotherapy, to reduce **the pain of multiple sclerosis and other disorders characterized by muscle spasticity**, to alleviate the symptoms of glaucoma and to improve appetite dangerously reduced from AIDS are effective medicine.

Users currently are regarded as criminals. Prohibition also prevents research on the medical use of marijuana.

Chemotherapy patients, especially those being treated for mucositis, nausea and anorexia.
Postoperative pain patients (using cannabinoids as an opioid adjunct to determine whether nausea and vomiting from opioids are reduced).

Patients with spinal cord injury, peripheral neuropathic pain or central post-stroke pain.
Patients with chronic pain and insomnia.

AIDS patients with cachexia (wasting and malnutrition), AIDS neuropathy or any significant pain problem.

7. Netherland's drug policy is one of the most nonpunitive in Europe. For more than 20 years, Dutch citizens over age eighteen have been permitted to buy and use cannabis (marijuana and hashish) in government-regulated coffee shops. The policy has not resulted in dramatically escalating marijuana use.

Marijuana

- There is no compelling evidence that marijuana contributes substantially to **traffic accidents** and fatalities.
- More than 750,000 people **are arrested** for marijuana each year, the vast majority for simple possession. This is far more than the total number of arrestees for all violent crimes combined, including murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

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Drug Policy Alliance 9. At some doses, marijuana affects perception and psychomotor performance – changes which could impair driving ability. However consistently less than produced by low to moderate doses of alcohol and many legal medications. Marijuana tends to make subjects more cautious. In cases where THC is detected in the blood, alcohol is almost always detected as well.

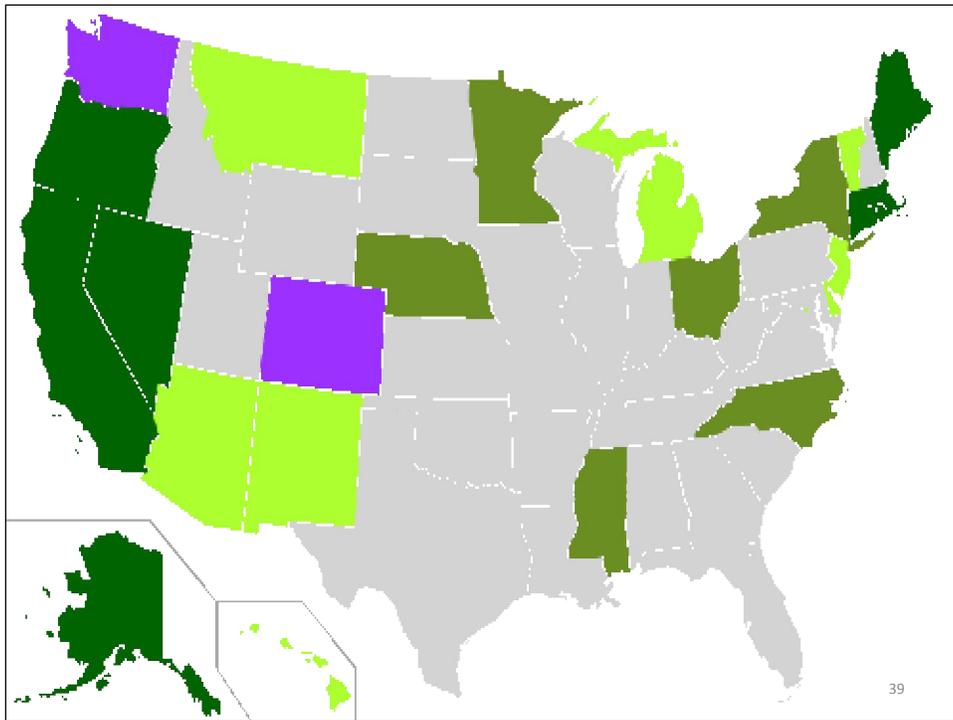
10. Of those charged with marijuana violations, approximated 86 percent , 663,032 Americans were charged with possession only. The remaining 94,937 were charged with “sale/manufacture” which includes cultivation offenses even if for personal or medical use. In past years, roughly 30 percent of those arrested were age 19 or younger.

Is Marijuana Dangerous?

- What are Americans telling us?
- Should marijuana be legalized?
- Are the residents of one half of our states irrational?
- Why are they approving medical marijuana? Why have Washington and Colorado legalized marijuana?

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Policy Questions



Map of the US showing US cannabis laws.

Light Green Medical 18 states and D.C., add New Hampshire and Illinois in 2013

Medium green decriminalized cannabis possession laws. Alabama and New York with pending medical marijuana laws.

Dark green State with both medical and decriminalized possession laws.

Purple State with legalized cannabis.

Nevada has laws decriminalizing cannabis possession for adults age 21 and over; non-medical cannabis possession remains a felony with a minimum one-year and a maximum four-year prison sentence for adults under age 21. Thus, Nevada is not considered to have fully decriminalized marijuana.^[1]

Maryland has an active medical marijuana program, but this is really an affirmative defense law rather than an active program. Therefore it is not included above.

Other states with pending legislation to Legalize Medical Marijuana include Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, and Oklahoma.

Currently: Five states are considering legislation to legalize adult consumption and sale of marijuana.

Nine states are considering legislation to decriminalize minor marijuana possession offenses.

Eight states are considering legislation to legalize the use of marijuana for therapeutic purposes. NORML Feb 14, 2013

Portland, Maine and Lansing Michigan will be considering legalization laws this fall.

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police have come out in favor if citing but not arresting citizens found with marijuana for personal use.