

How The U.S. Freight Car Fleet Has Changed

31-Dec	Plain Box	Equipped Box	Gondola	Hopper	Covered Hopper	Flat	Refrig.	Tank	Other
1980	251,420	179,944	184,875	347,867	299,986	152,661	79,370	183,989	30,715
1984	160,148	148,104	163,663	303,339	302,522	142,046	58,619	182,661	25,180
1988	104,195	103,495	134,769	237,116	284,556	132,365	48,209	177,997	16,239
1992	69,571	98,507	142,141	204,142	295,728	123,770	36,469	190,896	11,912
1993	55,771	110,752	148,541	190,094	302,903	124,796	35,258	194,328	10,689
1994	47,690	116,324	156,628	187,865	311,910	128,767	33,728	199,318	10,182
1995	42,866	117,945	171,217	175,350	325,882	133,056	33,068	209,728	9,815
1996	39,155	117,129	179,046	166,980	350,611	131,840	31,103	215,482	9,227
1997	31,681	124,893	187,224	163,917	365,196	134,233	29,650	225,029	8,596
1998	26,594	130,039	197,972	164,506	382,316	143,758	29,645	232,425	8,412
1999	24,969	134,182	209,768	170,390	401,217	150,385	28,452	241,776	7,697
2000	23,209	132,582	210,004	167,936	408,106	157,237	26,848	247,600	7,274
2001	21,367	119,209	201,336	154,206	390,444	149,993	25,556	246,108	5,917
2002	21,002	117,054	200,416	151,129	385,461	148,938	24,696	245,173	5,801
2003	19,952	112,670	199,217	143,720	378,354	151,083	24,124	244,124	5,736
2004	19,203	115,136	201,295	143,252	377,055	158,798	24,204	243,632	5,345
2005	20,002	113,828	200,713	150,131	382,145	168,131	24,321	247,893	5,081
2006	20,104	111,991	206,666	159,324	393,803	171,455	23,492	254,778	4,895

Note: Changing traffic growth/mixes, better utilization and higher capacities all contribute to fleet changes.

Source: Policy and Economics Department, AAR

Among car types, hoppers hop to it in '06

At year-end 2006, the U.S. freight-car fleet comprised 1,346,508 cars, a 2.6 percent increase compared with 2005's total of 1,312,245, and the largest year-over-year increase since 1999's 4 percent hike.

The biggest car-type gainer? Hoppers. At year-end 2006, the U.S. hopper fleet comprised 159,324 units, a 6.1 percent increase compared with the 150,131 hoppers in the fleet as of Dec. 31, 2005. Note: In 2001, Canadian National Railway Co. and Canadian Pacific Railway started counting as their own cars they'd acquired from U.S. roads in the late 1990s.