

Reading text 1 Humans and their cars constituted the greatest love affair of the past century. U.S. household and vehicle statistics

	No. of registered vehicles (thousands)	No. of households (thousands)	Total vehicle miles (millions)	Year
1950	43,554	43,501	458,246	
1980	80,776	139,831	1,527,295	
2000	104,705	213,300	2,746,925	
2010	117,538	239,812	2,966,494	

Source Transportation Energy Data Book: Edition 31, Chapter 8, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, U.S. Department of Energy, 2010. When one considers that in the United States the number of vehicles is increasing faster than the population, it looks like the love affair with the automobile has turned into an addiction. Most people who don't have a car want one, and those who already own one would like a newer, bigger, faster, and fancier model. Cars represent freedom, mobility, power, and status.