

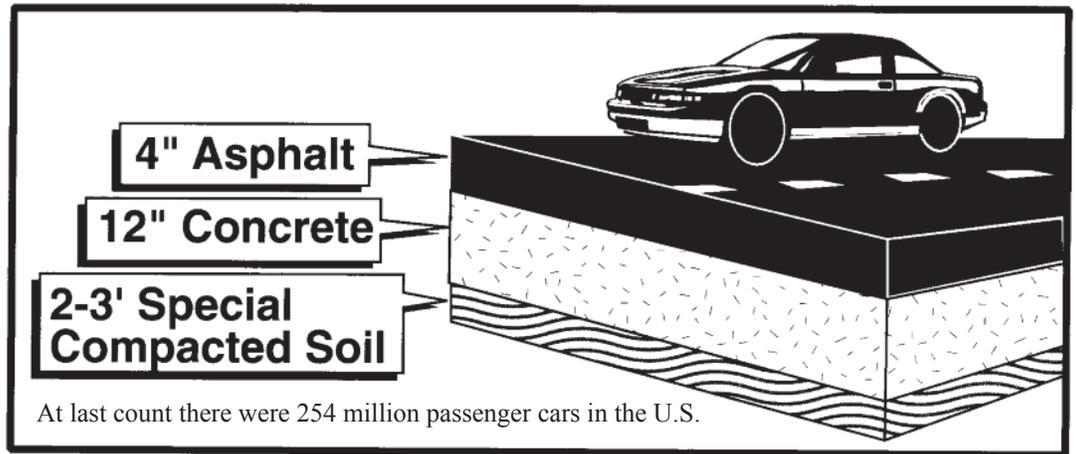
Roads & Highways

There are more than 4.03 million miles of public roads in the United States. The majority of the hard-surfaced roads do not have both asphalt and concrete surfaces, like the *ultimate* road shown below. However, a two-lane road is at least 24-feet wide, so you can begin to estimate the amount of materials that were mined to construct the roads we use every day.

Sources: DOE, DOT, USDA, FHA

Roads cover nearly 27 million acres of land.

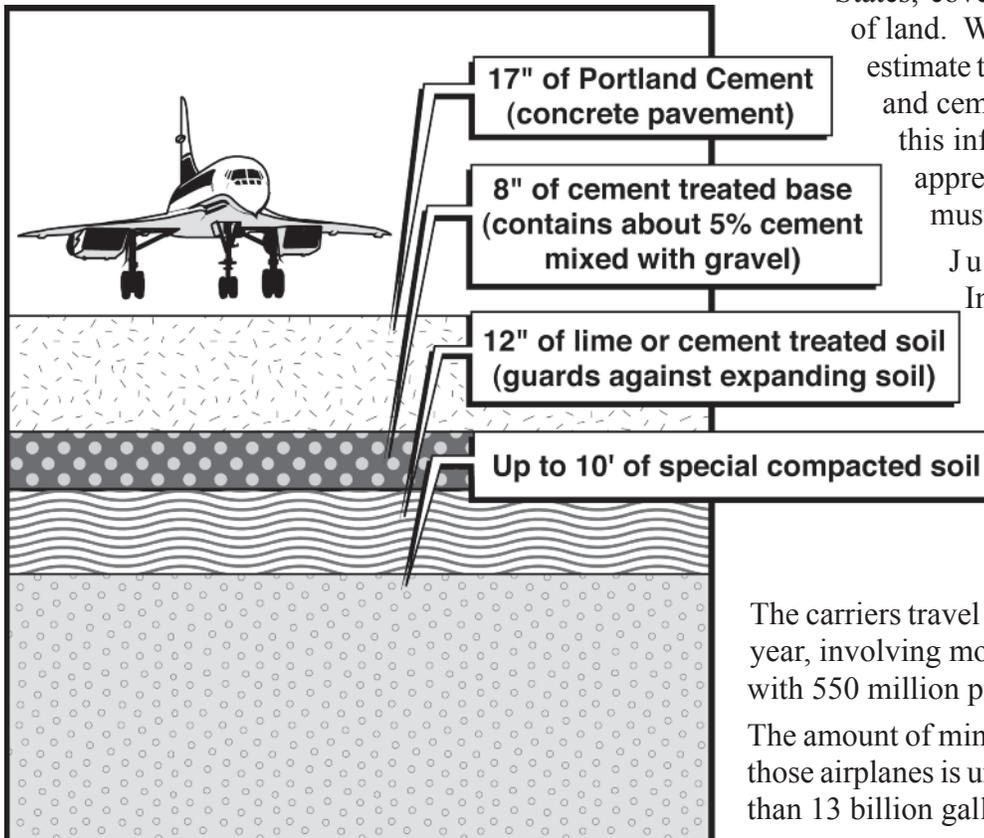
Passenger cars and small trucks consume nearly 138 billion gallons of fuel each year



There are 1.3 million miles of unpaved roads in the U.S. And every year, they need more dirt and gravel put on top of them because driving makes the dirt disappear. It disappears as dust when the sand and rocks are worn finer and finer by the weight of cars.

It takes about 85,000 tons of aggregates to build just one mile of a 4-lane highway. There are more than 597,500 bridges in the United States, the majority of them are made of concrete and steel.

Airports and Runways



There are about 19,854 airports in the United States, covering more than 4 million acres of land. While it is virtually impossible to estimate the amount of sand, gravel, stone, and cement used to build those airports, this information can help you begin to appreciate the amount of mining that must occur so people can fly.

Just one airport, Denver International Airport built in the 1990s, required more than 10 million tons of aggregates.

There are more than 228,000 non-military airplanes in the U.S., 7,800 of which are the commercial carriers (the airline companies).

The carriers travel more than 5.5 billion miles each year, involving more than 8 million different trips, with 550 million passengers on those planes.

The amount of minerals and metals needed to build those airplanes is unknown, but they consume more than 13 billion gallons of fuel each year.

All the above information is for the USA only.