



## Seat Belts: Who's Wearing Them?

---

When used, lap/shoulder safety belts reduce the risk of death to front-seat car passengers by 45 percent and reduce the risk of injury by 50 percent. For light truck occupants, safety belts reduce the risk of death by 60 percent and injury by 65 percent.

Seat belt use varies by type of vehicle. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that seat belts are used by:

- 86 percent of van and SUV occupants
- 84 percent of passenger car occupants
- 72 percent of pickup truck occupants

### **Teens and Seat Belts**

In 2007, belt use was lowest among 16- to 24-year-olds (77 percent) and highest among those 70 and older (88 percent). Among 16- to 24-year-old drivers, overall belt use when driving alone was 79 percent, but dropped to 78 percent when all passengers were also 16 to 24 years old, compared with having at least one passenger not in that age group (83 percent).

### **Additional NHTSA Data**

- Belt use was higher in fast traffic (86 percent) than slow traffic (78 percent), and higher in heavy traffic (84 percent) than light traffic (82 percent).
- Seat belt use was greater among females (86 percent) than males (79 percent).
- Drivers with no passengers were generally less likely to use seat belts (82 percent) than those with at least one passenger (86 percent).
- Rear-seat belt use was 74 percent. Rear-seat belt use was higher among occupants aged 8-15 years old (80 percent) and 70 and older (74 percent) than among those 16-24 years old (69 percent) and 25-69 years old (71 percent).
- In the District of Columbia and the 18 states that required seat belt use in all seating positions, rear-seat belt use was 85 percent compared with 66 percent in states that required only front seat use.