

## **DID YOU KNOW???**

### **UNBELTED IN REAR SEATS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS**

Unrestrained rear-seat occupants were nearly 8 times as likely to sustain a serious injury in a crash as restrained rear-seat occupants. So, if you want to increase your chances of a serious injury in a crash by 800 percent, than don't bother to buckle up when riding in the back seat! Obviously, no one wants to increase the chances of a serious injury. Then, why would anyone not buckle up when riding in the back?

People who don't use safety belts might think their neglect won't hurt anyone else. However, drivers are about twice as likely to be fatally injured in crashes in which the left rear passenger was unrestrained compared with crashes in which the passenger was belted, a 2013 University of Virginia study found.

In the August 3, 2017 edition of "Status Report" from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), here are some of the reasons given for not wearing a seat belt when riding in the rear seat:

- Many rear-seat passengers don't think belts are necessary because they perceive the back seat to be safer than the front. This shows a clear misunderstanding about the importance of safety belts, no matter where a person sits in a vehicle.
- Using a belt isn't a habit; they forget about it or just never or rarely use it.
- Nearly 40 percent of people surveyed said they sometimes don't buckle up in the rear seat because there is no law requiring it.

Prime-age adults (35 to 54 year-olds) were the least likely group to report always buckling up in the back seat. Sixty-six percent of this group reported always using a belt in back, compared with 76 percent of adults 55 and older and 73 percent of adults 18 to 34. Women were more likely than men to report always using a belt in the rear seat, and adults who had attended college were more likely to buckle up than adults with less education. These findings are in line with prior surveys of belt use.

Nearly two-thirds of part-time belt users and nonusers said audible rear-seat belt reminders would make them more likely to buckle up. IIHS studies have shown that driver belt use is higher and fatality rates are lower in vehicles with enhanced belt reminders than in vehicles without them. Still, few vehicles have belt reminders for the rear seat. In 2015, only 3 percent of models sold in the U.S. had them, and the number hasn't increased appreciably in newer vehicles.

So, do you buckle up when riding in the back seat? If you are the driver, do you require all back seat passengers to buckle up before you move the vehicle? Do you need a law to get you to use safety restraints in the rear seat?

Safety belts saved 13,941 lives during 2015, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates. If everyone buckled up, an additional 2,800 deaths could have been prevented.

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