



Seat belts save over 13,000 lives every year.

One of them could be yours...

The top 5 things you should know about buckling up.

1 Buckling up is the single most effective thing you can do to protect yourself in a crash.

In 2008, seat belts saved more than 13,000 lives nationwide. From 2004 to 2008, seat belts saved over 75,000 lives — enough people to fill a large sports arena. During a crash, being buckled up helps keep you safe and secure inside your vehicle, whereas being completely thrown out of a vehicle is almost always deadly. Seat belts are the best defense against impaired, aggressive, and distracted drivers.

2 Air bags are designed to work with seat belts, not replace them.

In fact, if you don't wear your seat belt, you could be thrown into a rapidly opening frontal air bag; a movement of such force could injure or even kill you. See www.safercar.gov for more on air bag safety.

3 How to buckle up safely:

Follow the guidelines shown in the photo to the right. As you can see, the lap belt and shoulder belt are secured across the pelvis and rib cage, which are more able to withstand crash forces than other parts of your body.

Place the shoulder belt across the middle of your chest and away from your neck.

Adjust the lap belt across your hips below your stomach.

NEVER put the shoulder belt behind your back or under an arm.

4 Fit matters.

- Before you buy a new car, check to see that its seat belts are a good fit for you.
- Ask your dealer about seat belt adjusters, which can help you get the best fit.
- If you need a roomier belt, contact your vehicle manufacturer to obtain seat belt extenders.
- If you drive an older or classic car with lap belts only, check with your vehicle manufacturer about how to retrofit your car with today's safer lap/shoulder belts.

5 Occupant protection is for everyone.

Visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Web site at www.nhtsa.gov and click on **4 Steps for Kids** to find out how to secure your littlest passengers.

If you're expecting a little one, check out NHTSA's "**Should pregnant women wear seat belts?**" brochure online to learn how important it is for you — and your unborn child — to buckle up the right way every trip, every time.



Need more help?

Contact us

For more information about seat belts, child safety seats, air bags, and adapting motor vehicles for drivers with special needs, call the DOT Auto Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236 or visit our Web site at www.nhtsa.gov.

Remember

For your safety and for the safety of all vehicle passengers, seat belt use for adults is required by law in all States in the United States (except for New Hampshire) and on all Federal lands.

