

# Make the connection.

Of those who die in vehicle crashes in Montana each year, 7 out of 10 are not buckled up.

# BUCKLE UP Every Time, Everyone.

Safety belts protect you by:

- Keeping you in the vehicle.
- Spreading the force of impact over a large area and the strongest parts of the body.
- Allowing your body to slow down gradually during a crash, lessening the impact on internal organs.
- Preventing impact with the interior of the vehicle.
- Preventing collision with other occupants of the vehicle.
- Preventing trauma to the brain and spinal cord caused by sudden change in motion.

**It's the law—the driver is responsible for everyone in the vehicle—and can be fined for each unrestrained passenger.**



[www.buckleup.mt.gov](http://www.buckleup.mt.gov)

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## Remember to buckle up

Safety belts help keep you within a vehicle's safety cage during a crash. While the safety cage is designed to protect you, it only works if you do your part. A lap and shoulder belt is the single most effective tool to prevent injuries and death. Without it, you may be ejected; injure or kill another passenger; suffer from serious injuries; or even die.

A crash can happen to anyone at any time, and the consequences can be fatal even at low speeds. It only takes a few seconds—be a role model and help ensure the safety of everyone in your vehicle.

Buckle up. Every time. Everyone.

## The impact at 30 mph is like falling from a 3-story building.

When the vehicle suddenly stops, your body continues moving forward at the original rate of speed. In a collision at only 30 mph, an unbelted adult of 160 lbs. will strike an object with a force equivalent to 2.4 TONS.

Unbelted passengers pose an enormous threat to belted passengers.

The chance of injury to a belted person increases 90% if there is an unbelted occupant in the vehicle at the time of the crash.

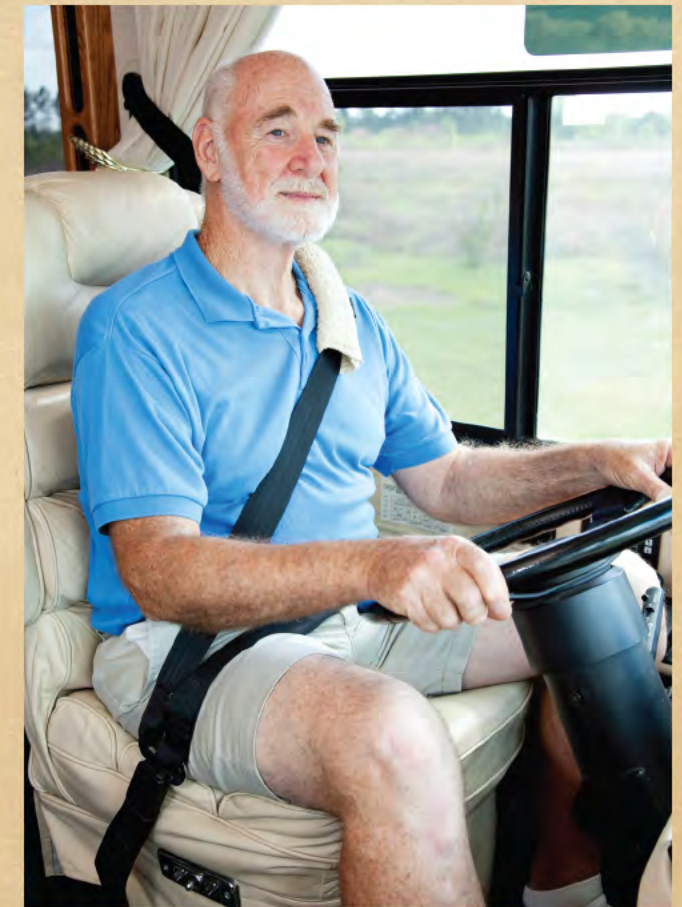
A 60-lb. child traveling in the rear seat would exert a force of approximately 1,800 lb. into the front seat in a head-on crash at 30 mph.

**The answer is simple. Always use your safety belt in a moving vehicle...and insist all passengers do the same.**

## For the best protection

Position your safety belt correctly. The straps should fit snugly over the strongest parts of your body.

- The shoulder belt should cross the center of your chest, snug against your body.
- Do NOT place it under your arm.
- Adjust the shoulder strap (on the interior door post) so it goes over the collarbone, not against the neck or face. The lap belt goes low across the hips—never across the stomach.
- Sit upright with your feet on the floor.



## Walk away from the crash

Vehicles are designed to protect properly restrained occupants. Today's cars and trucks have a "crumple zone" to absorb impact while preserving the passenger safety cage.



Safety restraints manage the force of three different collisions that happen in a crash:

1. Vehicle impact with another object, moving or stationary.
2. Your body's impact with the vehicle interior (dashboard, windshield, roof), with other passengers or with surfaces outside of the vehicle should you be thrown out.
3. The collision of internal organs against each other and your skeletal frame.

## Bad gamble

Think you're safer in a big vehicle—so you don't need to wear your seat belt?

### Pickup and SUV occupants are more likely to be ejected and killed in a rollover crash.

Most fatal crashes in Montana involve only one vehicle—and a rollover. These are the crashes most likely to result in ejection.

Ejection rate for fatally injured unrestrained occupants

Type of Vehicle	Ejection Rate	Fatality rate in rollovers
Passenger cars	29%	3.25
Pickups	38.4%	6.72
Sport Utility Vehicle	49.2%	9.29

*National Data, NHTSA 2009*

An occupant in a rollover is 14 times more likely to die than an occupant in a frontal crash.



## Big hurt

Below are likely causes of severe or fatal injury if you are thrown from a vehicle in a crash:

- Impact with the interior of the vehicle; some occupants are thrown through the windshield.
- Impact with the ground or another object; fatal head injuries are common among ejected occupants.
- Crushing by the vehicle as it continues to roll or lands on top of you.
- Only partially ejected, you sustain injuries upon impact with both the vehicle and other surfaces as it continues to travel.



### Ejected passengers are not likely to survive.

According to 2009 data reported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

- 77% of ejected occupants died in fatal crashes.
- Another 15.1% received incapacitating injuries.
- Less than half of 1 percent received no injuries.

You are 4 times more likely to receive fatal injuries compared to occupants who remain inside their vehicles in a crash.

## And what about airbags

If you are in a crash, a seat belt will increase your chances of survival by at least 50%. If your vehicle has airbags, the survival rate goes up to 60%.

- Air bags work with safety belts—not as a substitute. In order for it to be effective, you must be wearing your safety belt.
- Most airbags only deploy in frontal crashes. They do not protect you in a rear or roll-over crash.
- Side curtain airbags do not currently prevent ejection through a side door or window.



**Seat belts and air bags only work properly when used together.**