

QuickSmarts

Seatbelts and Restraints



It's a simple action that could save your life.

Wearing a properly adjusted restraint reduces the risk of fatal or serious injury by half¹. On average, 31 people are killed and 166 seriously injured on Queensland roads each year as a result of not wearing a seatbelt or an appropriate restraint².

The facts

- Drivers and passengers are around nine times more likely to be killed in a road crash if they are not wearing a seatbelt.³
- The latest research shows 7% of Queenslanders drive on our public roads without wearing a seatbelt.⁴
- Children aged up to 7 years must use an approved child restraint suitable for their height and size.
- The driver of a vehicle is responsible for the proper restraint of all passengers. This does not apply to buses or motorbikes.
- The penalty in Queensland for not wearing a seatbelt is \$400 and three demerit points for drivers and passengers aged 16 years or older.

What does the seatbelt do?

Put simply, a seatbelt could save your life. The main functions of a seatbelt are to:

- cause the occupant to decelerate at the same rate as the vehicle in a crash, maximising the distance over which the occupant comes to a stop
- spread the force of the impact over the stronger parts of the occupant's body (pelvis and chest area)
- prevent the occupant colliding with the interior parts of the vehicle
- reduce the risk of being thrown from the vehicle
- reduce the risk of being thrown through the windscreen.

References:

<https://streetsmarts.initiatives.qld.gov.au/seatbelts-and-restraints/factsheet>

1. NHTSA. (2001). Fifth/Sixth Report to Congress: Effectiveness of Occupant Protection Systems and Their Use. (Report No. DOT HS 809 442). Washington, DC: Author. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov> search: DOT HS 809442 Accessed 08/07/15.

2. Department of Transport and Main Roads (2015). Figures are based on the crashes validated in the Queensland Road Crash Information System from 1 January 2007 – 31 December 2011. Report reference number: rqC19729. Data extracted 23/02/15.

3. Department of Transport and Main Roads (2020). Figures are based on the crashes validated in the Queensland Road Crash Information System from 1 January 2015 – 31 December 2019. Report reference number: rqC31511. Data extracted 23/12/2020.

4. Footprints Market Research (2021). Department of Transport and Main Roads Driver Attitudes & Behaviour State-wide Research.

Child restraints

Ensuring children are properly restrained in the car is one of the most important things you can do for their safety and well-being. Children's bodies are particularly vulnerable as they are developing, and they have different requirements to adults.

- You should select a child restraint before the birth of your baby. You will need to check that the restraint fits your vehicle and that your other passengers can still sit comfortably once the restraint is installed.
- The child's height and size are the primary factors in determining the correct restraint, in addition to their age. If your child has reached the next age milestone they may not need to immediately transition to a new restraint if their size means the current one still fits.
- Shoulder height markers on the child restraints will ensure it is properly used, and will provide an indication of when your child is ready to move to the next appropriate restraint.

Further information about child restraints can be found on the website at:

www.qld.gov.au/transport/safety/rules/children

Kidsafe Queensland has qualified staff who can install and check child car restraints. They also offer baby capsules, travel systems and other child car restraints for short-term hire. If you have any questions or concerns about child restraints, contact Kidsafe on: (07) 3854 1829 or www.kidsafeqld.com.au

More information

Visit qld.gov.au/streetsmarts and search 'Seatbelts and restraints' for more information, including myth busters and references for all research and relevant content.

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