

Traffic Safety Facts

Crash • Stats



DOT HS 810 869

A Brief Statistical Summary

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Lives Saved in 2006 by Restraint Use and Minimum Drinking Age Laws

The use of seat belts in motor vehicles saved an estimated 15,383 lives in 2006. Seat belts have saved over 75,000 lives during the five-year period from 2002 through 2006. These annual lives saved counts, shown in Table 1, have been produced by NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis since 1975. The counts are estimates which are calculated using the effectiveness of each device or law that is mentioned.

In addition to the 15,383 lives saved in 2006 by seat belts, 2,796 lives were saved by frontal air bags, motorcycle helmets saved 1,658 lives, 21-year-old minimum drinking age laws saved 890 lives, and child restraints (child safety seats

and lap/shoulder belts) saved 425 lives. An additional 5,441 lives would have been saved in 2006 if all unrestrained motor vehicle occupants involved in fatal crashes had worn their seat belts; and if all motorcycle riders had been helmeted, then an additional 752 lives would have been saved.

The number of lives saved by frontal air bags has climbed each year during this five-year period from 2002 through 2006, as a larger percentage of the vehicle fleet has become equipped with frontal air bags. As the number of motorcycle riders has greatly increased in recent years, the number of lives saved by motorcycle helmets has also gone up sharply.

Table 1: Lives Saved by Restraint Use, and 21-Year-Old Minimum Drinking Age Laws, and Additional Lives That Would Have Been Saved at 100 Percent Seat Belt and Motorcycle Helmet Use, 2002 - 2006

Year	Lives Saved, Age 4 and Younger	Lives Saved, Age 5 and Older		Lives Saved, All Ages		Additional Lives That Would Have Been Saved at 100 Percent Use	
	Child Restraints	Seat Belts	Frontal Air Bags	Motorcycle Helmets	Minimum Drinking Age Law	Seat Belts	Motorcycle Helmets
2002	383	14,264	2,324	992	922	6,837	576
2003	447	15,095	2,519	1,173	918	6,151	651
2004	455	15,548	2,660	1,324	927	5,874	673
2005	424	15,688	2,752	1,554	882	5,667	731
2006	425	15,383	2,796	1,658	890	5,441	752

Source: FARS 2002-2005 Final File, 2006 Annual Report File

Table 2 on the back page shows lives saved totals in the year 2006 for all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The far left column is the lives saved by child restraints among children younger than five years old, and the next

three columns refer respectively to lives saved by seat belts, frontal air bags, and motorcycle helmets, among people age 5 and older. The numbers in the far right column represent the additional lives savable at 100 percent seat belt use.

Table 2: Lives Saved in 2006 by Child Restraints, Age 4 and Younger, and by Seat Belts, Frontal Air Bags, and Motorcycle Helmets, Age 5 and Older

State	Lives Saved by Child Restraints	Lives Saved by Seat Belts	Lives Saved by Frontal Air Bags	Lives Saved by Motorcycle Helmets	Additional Lives Savable at 100 Percent Seat Belt Use
Alabama	10	452	87	56	185
Alaska	0	33	4	4	10
Arizona	13	366	72	29	175
Arkansas	14	174	49	11	138
California	52	1888	218	258	316
Colorado	8	168	34	8	74
Connecticut	3	117	20	11	37
Delaware	1	54	10	2	17

Table 2: Lives Saved in 2006 by Child Restraints, Age 4 and Younger, and by Seat Belts, Frontal Air Bags, and Motorcycle Helmets, Age 5 and Older (continued)

State	Lives Saved by Child Restraints	Lives Saved by Seat Belts	Lives Saved by Frontal Air Bags	Lives Saved by Motorcycle Helmets	Additional Lives Savable at 100 Percent Seat Belt Use
DC	0	11	2	1	2
Florida	9	923	200	176	394
Georgia	29	650	123	78	172
Hawaii	0	50	7	4	8
Idaho	4	106	15	9	47
Illinois	19	465	90	17	133
Indiana	12	324	58	13	125
Iowa	6	197	29	5	47
Kansas	5	167	34	12	93
Kentucky	6	250	61	18	203
Louisiana	7	350	79	49	189
Maine	1	66	13	4	33
Maryland	3	292	43	43	58
Massachusetts	0	115	33	26	82
Michigan	8	538	72	59	81
Minnesota	4	180	36	9	68
Mississippi	11	262	72	26	180
Missouri	5	279	80	45	188
Montana	3	77	18	7	44
Nebraska	9	91	19	8	52
Nevada	8	158	27	24	39
New Hampshire	0	26	12	4	28
New Jersey	4	165	38	45	44
New Mexico	6	207	28	6	49
New York	7	494	83	99	170
North Carolina	23	675	107	81	173
North Dakota	0	39	7	0	20
Ohio	10	415	86	24	175
Oklahoma	22	279	58	10	108
Oregon	8	259	17	25	40
Pennsylvania	12	417	105	58	162
Rhode Island	0	10	5	3	9
South Carolina	2	309	74	17	195
South Dakota	1	33	14	3	34
Tennessee	17	423	90	71	206
Texas	41	1611	235	74	376
Utah	4	143	19	5	33
Vermont	0	42	8	4	15
Virginia	8	321	73	40	155
Washington	4	277	35	44	34
West Virginia	3	124	30	17	39
Wisconsin	1	238	53	14	131
Wyoming	2	73	14	2	55
National	425	15383	2796	1658	5441
Puerto Rico	1	107	17	29	21

