

# Why buckle up? So, we can see you again. It's also our law.



According to the Montana Youth Risk Behavioral Study, Montana high school students report **always wearing a seatbelt about half of the time while driving a vehicle and less than half of the time while riding as a passenger in a vehicle.**

Of teens aged 14-18 who were involved in a motor vehicle crash and sustained severe injuries, **71%** were not wearing a seatbelt. ***How many of those teens would be alive today if they had buckled up?***

Montana law places the responsibility on the driver to ensure **each occupant** is properly buckled or in a child safety seat (MCA 61-13-103). In the event of a crash, an unbuckled occupant can seriously injure or kill other occupants in the vehicle.

The **Montana Seatbelt Use Act** requires the use of seatbelts by the driver and each occupant of each vehicle. State law also requires child safety restraint systems for children under the age of 6 and weighing less than 60 pounds.

Seatbelts and air bags are meant to work together to keep drivers and passengers safe. The presence of air bags in a vehicle does NOT mean seatbelts are unnecessary.

Whether a person is belted or not often becomes the difference between life and death. While researchers may differ by a few percentage points either way, figures from seatbelt studies reveal:

- Seatbelts can reduce the number of serious injuries by 50 percent.
- Seatbelts can reduce fatalities by 40 to 60 percent.

Information courtesy of Montana Department of Justice: <https://dojmt.gov/driving/driving-safety/>

**You care about your family and your friends. *They care about you.***  
**Make it a habit, on short trips and long trips.**  
**Buckle up every time, every trip, everybody.**

<http://plan2live.mt.gov/>

