



**BE  
RESPONSIBLE  
ON THE ROAD**

# Every motor vehicle crash is essentially comprised of three collisions.

**1. The Vehicle Collision:** Occurs when the vehicle hits another object and comes to an abrupt stop in nearly one-tenth of a second. The faster you are traveling at the point of collision, the greater the force of the impact.

**2. The Human Collision:** Occurs when the vehicle's occupants hit some part of the vehicle. At the point of impact, unbelted occupants are still traveling at the original speed of the vehicle. Just after the vehicle comes to a complete stop, these unbelted occupants will slam into the steering wheel, the windshield, or other passengers in the vehicle.

**3. The Internal Collision:** Even after the occupant's body comes to a complete stop, the internal organs are still moving forward. These organs suddenly hit other organs or the skeletal system, which often causes many serious or fatal injuries.

People above the age of 12 can protect themselves by wearing a lap-and-shoulder safety belt. A shoulder belt helps keep your head and chest from striking the steering wheel, dashboard, and windshield during a crash. The lap belt keeps you from being thrown forward.

If you wear the lap belt too loose or too high around your waist, you can defeat its lifesaving effectiveness. The lap belt portion should be snug and low across your hips.

The shoulder belt fits properly when the webbing fits over your shoulder, across your collarbone, and diagonally across your chest. Do not wear the shoulder belt under your arm.

A common mistake is to wear the shoulder belt without the lap belt. You could be thrown forward and slip under the shoulder belt. That might lead to a broken collarbone or leg – or even strangulation. It could also result in ejection and death.

All occupants age 12 and older should wear their seat belt, whether they are in the front or rear of the vehicle. As mentioned above, unbelted passengers can become projectiles - injuring others within the vehicle. For people aged 8-12, they should sit in the back seat with the seat belt fastened. For children 8 and under, child seats or booster seats (depending upon age and size) are necessary for protection. If you are unaware of the proper child restraints, contact your local police department.

As the driver of a vehicle, you should make sure all passengers are buckled in before setting the vehicle in motion. Be a good example and buckle up every time. If all motor vehicle occupants wear safety belts properly, thousands of lives could be saved each year.



## Don't Speed...It's Not Worth It

Speed limits are set for safety reasons. The limits are not arbitrary, but based on calculations about what speed is usually safe under a variety of conditions for a particular road or highway.

At times, the posted speed is higher than the safe speed. For example, you should drive slower than the speed limit when rain, ice, or snow are present. There are also other times when traveling too fast for conditions has nothing to do with the weather. When passing a school that has just let out or a busy playground on a narrow street with cars parked on either side, anything faster than a crawl is dangerous.

Many people view speeding as being a problem on highways, but it is actually much more serious on city streets and local roads. These roads offer a mixture of commuters, pedestrians, schoolchildren, and bicyclists.

Common reasons for speeding include:

- Having a busy schedule.
- Not wanting to be late.

- Over-confidence in your own driving ability.
- Thinking that "I won't get caught."
- Believing the speed limit is set too low.
- Not paying attention to what the speed limit is.
- Getting a thrill out of fast driving.

In many cases, drivers don't understand the risks being taken when speeding. Motor-vehicle accidents are the leading cause of unintentional death. Speed:

- Determines the force of impact if you crash. The faster you go, the worse the damage.
- Increases the necessary stopping distance.
- Expands the distance a vehicle travels as the driver responds to a hazard.
- Lessens the ability of the driver to steer around road hazards.
- Increases wear on the vehicle's tires and braking system.
- Decreases the effectiveness of guardrails, barriers, etc from protecting occupants.
- Decreases others' ability to judge distances, increasing the likelihood of a crash.
- Decreases the fuel-efficiency of your vehicle. Save money and slow down.