



# Lives Saved in 2009 by Restraint Use and Minimum-Drinking-Age Laws

In 2009, the use of seat belts in passenger vehicles saved an estimated 12,713 lives. Seat belts have saved over 72,000 lives during the 5-year period from 2005 through 2009. 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 that are calculated using the effectiveness of each device or law that is mentioned.

In addition to the 12,713 lives saved in 2009 by seat belts (occupants 5 and older), 2,381 lives were saved by frontal air bags (occupants 13 and older), 1,483 lives were saved by motorcycle helmets, 623 lives were saved by 21-year-old minimum-drinking-age laws, and 309 lives (age 4 and under) were saved by child restraints (child

safety seats and lap/shoulder belts). An additional 3,688 lives would have been saved in 2009 if all unrestrained passenger vehicle occupants 5 and older involved in fatal crashes had worn their seat belts; and if all motorcyclists had been helmeted, then an additional 732 lives would have been saved.

Table 1 shows that the number of lives saved by seat belts among occupants 5 and older declined from 13,312 in 2008 to 12,713 in 2009. The number of lives saved by frontal air bags, motorcycle helmets, and the minimum legal drinking age also declined from 2008 to 2009. The number of lives saved by child restraints increased from 286 in 2008 to 309 in 2009.

**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, 2005-2009**

Year	Lives Saved, Age 4 & Younger	Lives Saved, Age 5 & Older	Lives Saved, Age 13 & Older	Lives Saved, All Ages	Lives Saved	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
2005	424	15,688	2,752	1,554	882	5,667	731
2006	427	15,458	2,824	1,667	888	5,468	756
2007	388	15,223	2,800	1,788	831	5,048	805
2008	286	13,312	2,557	1,836	716	4,171	827
2009	309	12,713	2,381	1,483	623	3,688	732

Source: FARS 2005-2008 Final File, 2009 Annual Reporting File

Table 2 shows lives saved totals in 2009 for all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The far left column is the lives saved by child restraints, and the next three columns refer respectively to lives saved by seat belts, lives saved by frontal air bags, and lives

saved by motorcycle helmets. The numbers in the two far-right columns represent the additional lives savable at 100 percent seat belt use and 100 percent helmet use, respectively. Due to rounding, the sum of the State totals may not equal the national total.

**Table 2: Lives Saved in 2009 by Child Restraints, Seat Belts, Frontal Air Bags, and Motorcycle Helmets**

State	Lives Saved by Child Restraints, Age 4 and Younger	Lives Saved by Seat Belts, Age 5 and Older	Lives Saved by Frontal Air Bags, Age 13 and Older	Lives Saved by Motorcycle Helmets, All Ages	Additional Lives Savable at 100 Percent Restraint Use	
					Seat Belts	Motorcycle Helmets
Alabama	9	307	69	41	82	3
Alaska	1	30	4	3	7	1
Arizona	11	217	44	32	91	25
Arkansas	3	212	46	18	125	14
California	31	1365	170	205	147	17
Colorado	0	163	31	16	68	23
Connecticut	0	77	17	10	24	10
Delaware	1	40	8	3	13	3
DC	0	4	1	1	0	1
Florida	20	726	162	118	266	80
Georgia	11	476	94	76	130	4
Hawaii	1	17	5	8	2	8
Idaho	1	92	14	9	40	7
Illinois	11	366	65	14	66	40
Indiana	9	305	51	13	50	33
Iowa	5	159	27	5	27	15
Kansas	8	139	31	9	75	12
Kentucky	9	315	64	21	135	19
Louisiana	6	250	62	46	151	9
Maine	1	70	13	3	25	7
Maryland	0	237	38	35	30	4
Massachusetts	1	81	24	28	52	3
Michigan	3	397	58	58	23	4
Minnesota	8	174	31	7	38	15
Mississippi	5	205	64	24	134	2
Missouri	5	268	70	38	161	8
Montana	1	74	16	4	38	7
Nebraska	1	75	19	6	32	2
Nevada	4	85	14	24	18	1
New Hampshire	1	36	9	5	26	5
New Jersey	0	192	38	30	31	5
New Mexico	3	173	25	1	38	15
New York	8	456	69	79	101	8
North Carolina	19	580	96	83	125	6
North Dakota	2	55	12	0	25	3
Ohio	11	326	79	21	128	49
Oklahoma	11	267	54	17	109	30
Oregon	1	195	23	27	15	3
Pennsylvania	7	404	93	58	120	40
Rhode Island	0	11	5	4	10	5
South Carolina	5	314	69	15	138	31
South Dakota	1	39	11	1	28	5
Tennessee	6	351	75	57	152	9
Texas	41	1407	220	88	223	104
Utah	2	107	17	7	31	7
Vermont	1	25	7	4	9	1
Virginia	10	263	59	42	115	2
Washington	4	213	28	36	21	3
West Virginia	2	130	29	12	44	2
Wisconsin	3	198	44	16	110	21
Wyoming	1	45	10	2	38	4
<b>National*</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>12,713</b>	<b>2,381</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>3,688</b>	<b>732</b>
Puerto Rico	0	69	15	10	13	14

\*Estimates for States may not add up to national total due to independent rounding.