



SAFETY BELTS



Why you should use them?

Wearing a seat belt is one of the easiest ways of protecting yourself and your passengers if you are involved in a car accident. Regardless of where you drive and no matter how safe a driver you are, sudden stops and collisions do happen. Even if your vehicle is equipped with air bags, always wear your seat belt. Every year about 40 people are killed because they were not wearing a seat belt. Seat belts prevent you from being ejected from a vehicle, they reduce the time for the body to come to a stop in a crash, they spread the impact force over a greater area of the body, and minimize contact with a vehicles' interior. By Singapore law a S\$120 fine will be imposed on any passenger who is not belted up. The driver will be fined S\$120 and given 3 demerit points for failing to ensure that passengers are belted up. If the driver is not belted up, he/she will be fined S\$120 and given 3 demerit points.

Wearing a seat belt can be a life or death decision - both for you and your passengers. It doesn't make any difference if you are driving the posted speed limits or speeding; a crash at 40 KPH is like falling from a three story building onto concrete.



It is not true that the back seat is safer than the front seat. If you are sitting in the back seat and not wearing a seat belt you could easily be killed or seriously injured.

Passengers not wearing seat belts can become projectiles and kill or seriously injure others in the car if the driver has to brake suddenly.

The Human Collision

Imagine running as fast as you can into a wall. You'd expect to get pretty banged up. Do you think you could stop yourself if the wall suddenly loomed up when you were two feet from it? This is exactly the situation you face when the front of your car hits something at only 15 KPH. The car stops in the first tenth of a second but you keep moving at the same rate you were traveling until something stops *you* - the steering wheel, dashboard or windshield - if you're not wearing your safety belt. Bad enough at 15 KPH, but at 30 KPH you hit "the wall" four times as hard as you would at 15. Or to put it another way, **with the same impact you'd feel as if you fell three stories.**

A properly worn safety belt keeps that second collision - the human collision - from happening.

Wear It Right

"Properly worn" means with both straps snugly fitted to transfer the impact of the collision to the parts of your body that can take it - your hipbones and shoulder bones. With just the shoulder strap on, you can still slide out from under the belt and be strangled, while the lap belt alone doesn't keep your face from hitting the steering wheel.

What's Your Reason For Not Wearing One?

"I'm only going to the shopping center." Actually, this is the most important time to wear a safety belt since 80% of traffic fatalities occur within 25 miles of home and under 40 KPH.



"I won't be in an accident: I'm a good driver." Your good driving habits will certainly help you to avoid accidents. But, even if you're a good driver, a bad driver may still hit you.

"I'll just brace myself." Even if you had the split-second timing to do this the force of the impact would shatter the arm or leg you used to brace yourself.

"I'm afraid the belt will trap me in the car." Statistically, the best place to be during an accident is in your car. If you're thrown out of the car, you're 25 times more likely to die. And, if you need to get out of the car in a hurry - as in the extremely tiny percent of accidents involving fire or submergence - you can get out a lot faster if you haven't been knocked unconscious inside your car.

"They're uncomfortable." Actually, modern safety belts can be made so comfortable that you may wonder if they really work. Most of them give when you move - a device locks them in place only when the car stops suddenly. You can put a little bit of slack in most belts simply by pulling on the shoulder strap. Others come with comfort clips, which hold the belt in a slightly slackened position. If the belt won't fit around you, you can get a belt extender at most car dealerships.

"I don't need a belt - I've got an airbag." Lucky you! An air bag increases the effectiveness of a safety belt by 40 percent. But air bags were never meant to be used in place of safety belts, since they don't protect against side impacts at all.

Seat Belt Save Lives!

