



# Lives Saved in 2010 by Restraint Use and Minimum Drinking Age Laws

In 2010, the use of seat belts in passenger vehicles saved an estimated 12,546 lives. Seat belts have saved over 69,000 lives during the 5-year period from 2006 to 2010. 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. More information on the methodology of lives saved estimates is available in two NHTSA publications: *Lives Saved FAQs* (DOT HS 811 105), which answers 30 common lives saved questions and includes references to many other reports on lives saved; and *Lives Saved Calculations for Seat Belts and Frontal Air Bags* (DOT HS 811 206), which describes in detail the methodology of estimating lives saved by seat belts and frontal air bags.

In addition to the 12,546 lives saved in 2010 by seat belts (occupants age 5 and older), 2,306 lives were saved by

frontal air bags (occupants 13 and older), 1,550 lives were saved by motorcycle helmets, 550 lives were saved by 21-year-old-minimum-drinking-age laws, and 303 lives (age 4 and younger) were saved by child restraints (child safety seats and lap/shoulder belts). An additional 3,341 lives would have been saved in 2010 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 706 lives would have been saved.

Table 1 shows that the number of lives saved by seat belts among occupants 5 and older declined from 12,763 in 2009 to 12,546 in 2010. The number of lives saved by child restraints, frontal air bags, and the minimum legal drinking age also declined from 2009 to 2010. The number of lives saved by motorcycle helmets increased from 1,486 in 2009 to 1,550 in 2010.

**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, 2006 - 2010**

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
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	307	12,763	2,387	1,486	626	3,700	733
2010	303	12,546	2,306	1,550	550	3,341	706

Source: 2006-2009 FARS Final Files and FARS 2010 Annual Report File

Table 2 shows lives saved totals in 2010 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 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. Due to rounding, the sum of the State totals may not equal the national total.

**Table 2: Lives Saved in 2010 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	16	317	73	48	78	2
Alaska	0	30	4	2	7	2
Arizona	10	197	39	23	87	20
Arkansas	3	178	44	20	96	19
California	16	1243	149	193	110	10
Colorado	6	158	32	16	66	20
Connecticut	1	108	24	10	29	13
Delaware	0	56	7	2	9	1
District of Columbia	0	2	1	1	0	0
Florida	11	769	151	111	229	78
Georgia	15	469	90	67	118	5
Hawaii	0	26	6	3	1	8
Idaho	3	96	14	7	41	6
Illinois	4	372	67	13	58	41
Indiana	7	356	57	11	61	34
Iowa	3	170	27	6	28	19
Kansas	8	146	33	7	71	11
Kentucky	12	289	57	23	127	22
Louisiana	7	263	55	37	139	3
Maine	1	91	13	5	29	4
Maryland	1	184	30	42	22	4
Massachusetts	0	83	23	29	48	2
Michigan	13	415	63	75	47	4
Minnesota	6	192	31	13	33	10
Mississippi	2	243	59	15	112	6
Missouri	10	238	69	50	152	5
Montana	1	68	14	7	34	5
Nebraska	3	72	15	8	29	0
Nevada	1	95	17	25	15	2
New Hampshire	0	33	11	5	24	7
New Jersey	1	178	36	37	26	3
New Mexico	4	192	24	1	40	14
New York	8	445	66	99	86	7
North Carolina	23	510	89	106	118	5
North Dakota	0	28	8	2	20	5
Ohio	17	363	83	26	139	47
Oklahoma	5	243	53	8	86	24
Oregon	1	161	16	20	12	2
Pennsylvania	5	356	100	57	136	47
Rhode Island	0	14	5	2	8	4
South Carolina	9	296	63	14	110	29
South Dakota	0	36	7	4	23	8
Tennessee	14	369	80	77	122	3
Texas	29	1425	211	100	195	92
Utah	7	99	16	6	23	4
Vermont	0	26	6	4	10	0
Virginia	4	272	59	50	112	1
Washington	7	218	28	37	13	3
West Virginia	6	90	25	13	45	4
Wisconsin	1	215	43	13	90	31
Wyoming	1	48	11	5	26	9
<b>National*</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>12,546</b>	<b>2,306</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>3,341</b>	<b>706</b>
Puerto Rico	0	66	19	5	93	15

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