

Seatbelt

Cars must be equipped with seatbelts for each seat, since the seatbelt protects its user effectively in an accident. A properly secured seatbelt keeps the person on his/her seat, preventing that person from slamming into the interior of the car in a possible collision. A seatbelt also slows down the stopping of the body, since the seatbelt stretches and divides the forces resulting from slowing down equally to those parts of the body that can best endure the strain.

As a car collides, there are, in fact, three types of collision impacts: first the car collides, then the person, and, finally, the internal organs of the person.

Seatbelt efficiency

According to the studies conducted in various countries, seatbelt use cuts down the number of fatalities by half and injuries become less severe, or are prevented altogether. Seatbelt is at its best in frontal collisions and in cases

where the car spins on its roof. Seatbelts are also very useful in side and rear accidents. However, the seatbelt is not always enough to save ones life in accidents where the other party has a lot bigger mass or the collision speed is great.

Without a seatbelt

If an accident takes place at a speed of no more than 7 km/h, an adult may be able to use his/her arms and hands to prevent being slammed into the steering wheel, dashboard or front seat. In accidents which involve urban area speeds (50 km/h), the collision weight of a person is already 40-fold, meaning that arms and hands are not enough to stop one from being slammed into the car interior or being thrown out of the car. A person who is sitting in the backseat without a seatbelt endangers also the people in the front.



Using seatbelt

One must use a seatbelt which has been installed into the seat, also in city traffic buses. The exception to this rule is people who have a medical condition (determined by a physician) and are therefore exempt from using a seatbelt. In addition there are certain exemptions granted on the grounds of work duties, such as short-duration distribution traffic. In such cases the prerequisite is that the distance travelled by car is less than 100 metres and that the use of seatbelt leads into considerable disadvantage.

The parent or guardian of a child less than 15 years old is in charge of the child travelling in the same car and has to make sure that the child uses a seatbelt or other appropriate safety equipment. If parent/guardian is not present, the driver of the vehicle is in charge of the seatbelt use of the underage passengers. Failure to use a seatbelt or other safety equipment may result in a fine.

In short

Seatbelt and safety equipment are needed when the collision forces are great, but they are not always enough to save a life if the collision speed is very high.

The opening locks of seatbelts have performed very well in different situations. It is possible to equip the seatbelt also with an emergency cutting device, i.e. seatbelt cutter.

A seatbelt must always be used in accordance to the instructions given in the car manual. The seatbelt must be replaced, if it has been used in a severe accident or there are significant signs of wearing down or the seatbelt is damaged in some other way.

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