

SAFETY BLITZ BUCKLED

OR



ALLIANCE INTERSTATE RISK
SERVICE



ATA COMP FUND

BUCKLE UP, BUTTERCUP.

The use of safety belts has been emphasized in school safety campaigns, driver education, & national ads for decades. We should all understand their importance! Despite this, myths about seatbelt usage persist. We aim to debunk these myths during this year's Safety Blitz... and give real-life examples!

MYTH: SEATBELTS ARE UNCOMFORTABLE

BUSTED

- Studies show that only **86%** of professional truck drivers claim to buckle up every time they are in their vehicle.
- Some common complaints are that seatbelts are **uncomfortable** or **restrict movement**. When worn properly, the belt should fit snugly across the lap and chest without restricting movement. Most drivers find that once the seat is adjusted comfortably, the belt fits securely, but not in a confining manner.
- There are **"comfort hacks"** including cushions and extenders, which can enhance comfort and reduce perceived restrictions.

(2023) Driver advised seatbelt was not comfortable. Therefore, driver buckled the seatbelt and sat on top of it with a cushion. The driver ran into the back of another 18-wheeler, hitting the steering wheel with his chest, and causing massive bruising and several broken bones.



MYTH: SIZE MATTERS

BUSTED

- Driving a large Commercial Motor Vehicle does not prevent crashes, nor does it keep injuries from occurring.
- **7 out of 10 truck drivers** killed in crashes were not wearing seatbelts, most because they were ejected from the cab.
- Even if an ejection does not occur, not securing with a safety belt can cause severe injuries due to being tossed about the cab like a **ragdoll**.
- A large truck may not sustain as much damage as a smaller vehicle, but **Newton's first law of motion** (an object at rest will stay at rest and an object in motion will stay in motion unless acted upon by an outside force) doesn't care about the size of the vehicle. It applies regardless. The seatbelt acts as the outside force keeping the driver restrained and prevents them from being thrown forward.

(2024) Driver lost control of CMV and hit three other vehicles. Driver was not wearing a seatbelt and was ejected from the cab of the truck, suffering six broken ribs, a torn rotator cuff, numerous lumbar disc displacements, and blindness.



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MYTH: TOO GOOD TO BUCKLE

BUSTED

- Some drivers believe if they are **“good” and “safe”**, they don't need to wear safety belts because they will never experience a collision. But what about the other, “not-so-good” drivers out there? Over **90%** of accidents are caused by human error, because people make mistakes.
- Other factors contributing to a crash can include mechanical failures, tire blowouts... and even that fickle Mother Nature and her unpredictable weather.
- There is a difference between a **GOOD** driver and a **PROFESSIONAL** driver. The pros know that buckling up isn't just the law... it's the safest decision you'll ever make in a vehicle.

(2023) Driver was not buckled while driving. The truck's steer tire ran off the road and shredded, causing the truck to go down the side of the road and roll. Passenger was asleep in the bunk, also not harnessed. Driver sustained injuries to shoulders, neck, and back; passenger injuries included left leg, neck, and right ankle.



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MYTH: SEATBELTS WILL TRAP YOU

BUSTED

- Fires/submersions happen in **less than half of 1%** of injury-producing collisions.
- Safety belts improve your chances of “escaping” by keeping you **conscious** and **in control**.
- There are **seatbelt cutter** and **glass breaker tools** that can assist with a quick escape.
- Don't believe that it's better to be thrown clear of the wreckage in the event of a crash. **Ejections rarely end with “good” results.**

(2022) According to dash cam footage, driver was eating while driving and choked on food, lost control of the truck, which crossed into oncoming traffic. Driver was unrestrained and was ejected from the truck into the ditch alongside the interstate. Driver was pronounced deceased at the scene.



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MYTH: NICE AND SLOW

BUSTED

- Accidents can occur, even in the shortest and slowest instances.
- Most crashes occur **within 25 miles** from home or terminal. **80%** of injuries or fatalities occur **under 40 MPH**.
- A collision at 30 MPH without a seatbelt restraint means an object (person) continuing to move forward at 30 MPH with nothing to stop it (them) but a steering wheel and/or windshield.

(2024) Driver was leaving the company terminal and merged into oncoming traffic. Driver came upon stopped vehicle in the middle of the road and was unable to stop in time. While attempting to swerve to miss the car, the truck hit it and jackknifed. Passenger was in sleeper berth unharnessed and slammed head against side of truck, resulting in a fatality.

