



USAG – FS/HAAF Safety Gram

Sustaining, Supporting, and Defending Safety Excellence



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Seat Belts: How They Save Lives

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Do you snap in your seat belt as soon as you get in the car? Do your children have the right safety seats for their weight and age? If you've answered no, even just once, you need to read on.

It's been proven time and again, on back roads and superhighways: A seat belt can save a life in a car accident. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), more than 15,000 lives are saved each year in the United States because drivers and their passengers were wearing seat belts when they were in accidents.

Seat Belt Safety: 5-Way Protection

Seat belts prevent occupants of the vehicle from serious injury in five ways.

- **Keeps the occupants of the vehicle inside.** “It’s clearly a myth that people are better off being thrown clear from the crash. People thrown from a vehicle are four times more likely to be killed than those who remain inside.
- **Restrains the strongest parts of the body.** Restraints are designed to contact your body at its strongest parts. For an older child and adult, these parts are the hips and shoulders, which is where the seat belt should be strapped.
- **Spreads out any force from the collision.** Lap-and-shoulder belts spread the force of the crash over a wide area of the body. By putting less stress on any one area, they can help you avoid serious injury. A shoulder strap also helps keep your head and upper body away from the dashboard, steering wheel, and other hard interior parts of the automobile should you stop suddenly or be hit by another vehicle.
- **Helps the body to slow down.** What is it that causes injury? A quick change in speed. Seat belts help extend the time it takes for you to slow down in a crash.
- **Protects your brain and spinal cord.** A seat belt is designed to protect these two critical areas. Head injuries may be hard to see immediately, but they can be deadly. Likewise, spinal cord injuries can have serious consequences.

Seat Belt Safety: Buckle Up Correctly

Adjusting your seat belt properly is a must: Getting the right fit is as important as wearing it. The strap that goes across your lap should fit snugly over your hips and upper thigh area. “If the belt rides up on the stomach, it could cause serious injuries in a crash

Shoulder belts should rest securely across your chest and shoulders between your breasts. Don’t ever let the strap fall across your neck or face and never place the strap under your arms or behind your back. “Any one of these positions can cause serious injury.

Manage The Risk – Protect The Force For additional information contact:

Your Unit Addition Duty Safety Officer (ADSO) or Collateral Duty Safety Person (CDSP), or

USAG Installation Safety Office: Fort Stewart Office @ 912-767-6541; Hunter Army Airfield Office @ 912-345-4901.