

Seat Belts

All cars manufactured since 1973 should be fitted with front and rear seat belts. Cars manufactured prior to that date, did not have to have seat belts but if they have been retrofitted, they must be worn.

Who is responsible for ensuring that occupants of a vehicle wear seat belts?

	Front Seat	Back Seat	Responsibility
Driver	Seat belt must be worn if fitted		Driver
Child under 3 years of age	Correct child restraint must be used	Correct child restraint must be used. If one is not available in a taxi, may travel unrestrained	Driver
Child from 3rd birthday up to 135 cms in height (or 12th birthday whichever they reach first)	Correct child restraint must be used.	Correct child restraint must be used where seat belts fitted. Must use adult belt in rear seat if correct child restraint not available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In a taxi; - For short distance in an unexpected necessity; - If two occupied child restraints prevent a third. 	Driver
Child 12 or 13, or over 135 cms in height	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Driver
Adult Passengers	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Passenger

Resource: www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk

What is the penalty for not wearing a seat belt?

Normally dealt with by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice (£30.00 fine) but carries a maximum fine of £500.00. It is not endorsable.

Who is exempt from wearing seat belts?

Some drivers are exempt on either medical or other grounds. The former, will need a medical certificate from a doctor, the latter include:

1. A person using a vehicle constructed or adapted for the delivery of goods or mail to consumers or addresses while engaged in making local rounds of deliveries or



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collections. ie the driver is exempt only when engaged in the round, not when driving to or from it.

2. Any driver carrying out a manoeuvre that includes reversing. This means that if you are doing a 3 point turn, you do not have to wear a seat belt at any point during the course of the manoeuvre but you must wear it as soon as the manoeuvre is concluded.
3. A qualified driver who is supervising the holder of a provisional licence, whilst that person is performing the manoeuvre described in the paragraph above.
4. A qualified driving examiner who, by wearing a seat belt during the course of a driving test, may endanger himself or any other person.
5. A person driving or riding in a vehicle whilst it is being used for fire brigade, police purposes or whilst carrying a person in lawful custody (that person also being exempt).
6. The driver of a licensed taxi while using that vehicle for seeking hire, answering a call for hire or carrying a passenger for hire.
7. The driver of a private hire vehicle while it is being used to carry a passenger for hire.
8. A person riding in a vehicle, which displays a trade licence, whose journey is for the purpose of investigating or remedying a mechanical fault in the vehicle.
9. A disabled person who is wearing a disabled person's belt.
10. A person riding in a vehicle, whilst it is taking part in a procession, organised by or on behalf of the Crown.

What is the law on child restraints?

“Child restraints” is the collective term for baby seats, child seats, booster seats, booster cushions, the suitability of which is determined by the weight of the child. All child restraints must comply with **UN ECE R44.03** standard (or subsequent versions eg **44.04**).

Never use a rear facing car seat in a passenger seat fitted with an airbag unless the airbag can has been switched off. The appropriate seats are as follows:

	Seat Facing	Weight and Age
Baby seats	Rear-facing	For children up to 13 kgs (approx age birth to 9-12 months)
Child seats	Forward facing	For children up to 9 kgs to 18 kgs (approx 9 months to 4 years)
Booster seats		For children 15 kgs and up (from approx 4 years)
Booster Cushions		For children from 22 kgs (from approx 6 years)

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