



# Seat Belt Use in 2011—Use Rates in the States and Territories

In 2011, seat belt use in the United States ranged from 73.2 percent in Massachusetts to 97.5 percent in Washington. These results are from probability-based observational surveys conducted by 50 States, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories. These surveys are conducted in accordance with criteria established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to ensure reliable results. Compliance with the criteria is verified annually by NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis.

The 2011 State and Territory surveys also found the following:

- Seventeen States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Northern Mariana Islands achieved use rate of 90 percent or higher. These States include Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, New Jersey, Michigan, Maryland, Nevada, Texas, Iowa, Indiana, Georgia, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, New Mexico, and Delaware.
- Jurisdictions with stronger seat belt enforcement laws continue to exhibit generally higher use rates than those with weaker laws. Rhode Island strengthened its seat belt law to a primary enforcement law, effective

July 2011. This State saw an increase in use rate from 78.0 percent in 2010 to 80.4 percent in 2011.

- Seat belt use rates in the States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, other U.S. Territories, and nationwide from 2004–2011 are listed in the following table. Rates in jurisdictions with primary seat belt enforcement during the calendar year of the survey are shaded in the table. However, the law might not have taken effect when the survey was being conducted.

### National Seat Belt Use Rate

The nationwide seat belt use was 84 percent in 2011 as measured by NHTSA's National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS). NOPUS is a national probability-based survey, which is independent from State belt use surveys. NOPUS provides NHTSA's official measure of nationwide seat belt use in the United States and other related information. Due to a difference in survey methodology, this survey provides a different measure of nationwide use than would be obtained by combining the use rates from the States and Territories.

**Table: Seat Belt Use in States, U.S. Territories, and Nationwide, 2004-2011**

State or U.S. Territory	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2010–2011 Change
Alabama	80.0%	81.8%	82.9%	82.3%	86.1%	90.0%	91.4%	88.0%	-3.4%
Alaska	76.7%	78.4%	83.2%	82.4%	84.9%	86.1%	86.8%	89.3%	2.5%
Arizona	95.3%	94.2%	78.9%	80.9%	79.9%	80.8%	81.8%	82.9%	1.1%
Arkansas	64.2%	68.3%	69.3%	69.9%	70.4%	74.4%	78.3%	78.4%	0.1%
California	90.4%	92.5%	93.4%	94.6%	95.7%	95.3%	96.2%	96.6%	0.4%
Colorado	79.3%	79.2%	80.3%	81.1%	81.7%	81.1%	82.9%	82.1%	-0.8%
Connecticut	82.9%	81.6%	83.5%	85.8%	88.0%	85.9%	88.2%	88.4%	0.2%
Delaware	82.3%	83.8%	86.1%	86.6%	91.3%	88.4%	90.7%	90.3%	-0.4%
Dist. Of Columbia	87.1%	88.8%	85.4%	87.1%	90.0%	93.0%	92.3%	95.2%	2.9%
Florida	76.3%	73.9%	80.7%	79.1%	81.7%	85.2%	87.4%	88.1%	0.7%
Georgia	86.7%	89.9%	90.0%	89.0%	89.6%	88.9%	89.6%	93.0%	3.4%
Hawaii	95.1%	95.3%	92.5%	97.6%	97.0%	97.9%	97.6%	96.0%	-1.6%
Idaho	74.0%	76.0%	79.8%	78.5%	76.9%	79.2%	77.9%	79.1%	1.2%
Illinois	83.0%	86.0%	87.8%	90.1%	90.5%	91.7%	92.6%	92.9%	0.3%
Indiana	83.4%	81.2%	84.3%	87.9%	91.2%	92.6%	92.4%	93.2%	0.8%
Iowa	86.4%	87.1%	89.6%	91.3%	92.9%	93.1%	93.1%	93.5%	0.4%

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**Table: Seat Belt Use in States, U.S. Territories, and Nationwide, 2004-2011**

State or U.S. Territory	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2010–2011 Change
Kansas	68.3%	69.0%	73.5%	75.0%	77.4%	77.0%	81.8%	82.9%	1.1%
Kentucky	66.0%	66.7%	67.2%	71.8%	73.3%	79.7%	80.3%	82.2%	1.9%
Louisiana	75.0%	77.7%	74.8%	75.2%	75.5%	74.5%	75.9%	77.7%	1.8%
Maine	72.3%	75.8%	77.2%	79.8%	83.0%	82.6%	82.0%	81.6%	-0.4%
Maryland	89.0%	91.1%	91.1%	93.1%	93.3%	94.0%	94.7%	94.2%	-0.5%
Massachusetts	63.3%	64.8%	66.9%	68.7%	66.8%	73.6%	73.7%	73.2%	-0.5%
Michigan	90.5%	92.9%	94.3%	93.7%	97.2%	98.0%	95.2%	94.5%	-0.7%
Minnesota	82.1%	83.9%	83.3%	87.8%	86.7%	90.2%	92.3%	92.7%	0.4%
Mississippi	63.2%	60.8%	73.6%	71.8%	71.3%	76.0%	81.0%	81.9%	0.9%
Missouri	75.9%	77.4%	75.2%	77.2%	75.8%	77.2%	76.0%	79.0%	3.0%
Montana	80.9%	80.0%	79.0%	79.6%	79.3%	79.2%	78.9%	76.9%	-2.0%
Nebraska	79.2%	79.2%	76.0%	78.7%	82.6%	84.8%	84.1%	84.2%	0.1%
Nevada	86.6%	94.8%	91.2%	92.2%	90.9%	91.0%	93.2%	94.1%	0.9%
New Hampshire	NA	NA	63.5%	63.8%	69.2%	68.9%	72.2%	75.0%	2.8%
New Jersey	82.0%	86.0%	90.0%	91.4%	91.8%	92.7%	93.7%	94.5%	0.8%
New Mexico	89.7%	89.5%	89.6%	91.5%	91.1%	90.1%	89.8%	90.5%	0.7%
New York	85.0%	85.0%	83.0%	83.5%	89.1%	88.0%	89.8%	90.5%	0.7%
North Carolina	86.1%	86.7%	88.5%	88.8%	89.8%	89.5%	89.7%	89.5%	-0.2%
North Dakota	67.4%	76.3%	79.0%	82.2%	81.6%	81.5%	74.8%	76.7%	1.9%
Ohio	74.1%	78.7%	81.7%	81.6%	82.7%	83.6%	83.8%	84.1%	0.3%
Oklahoma	80.3%	83.1%	83.7%	83.1%	84.3%	84.2%	85.9%	85.9%	0.0%
Oregon	92.6%	93.3%	94.1%	95.3%	96.3%	96.6%	97.0%	96.6%	-0.4%
Pennsylvania	81.8%	83.3%	86.3%	86.7%	85.1%	87.9%	86.0%	83.8%	-2.2%
Rhode Island	76.2%	74.7%	74.0%	79.1%	72.0%	74.7%	78.0%	80.4%	2.4%
South Carolina	65.7%	69.7%	72.5%	74.5%	79.0%	81.5%	85.4%	86.0%	0.6%
South Dakota	69.4%	68.8%	71.3%	73.0%	71.8%	72.1%	74.5%	73.4%	-1.1%
Tennessee	72.0%	74.4%	78.6%	80.2%	81.5%	80.6%	87.1%	87.4%	0.3%
Texas	83.2%	89.9%	90.4%	91.8%	91.2%	92.9%	93.8%	93.7%	-0.1%
Utah	85.7%	86.9%	88.6%	86.8%	86.0%	86.1%	89.0%	89.2%	0.2%
Vermont	79.9%	84.7%	82.4%	87.1%	87.3%	85.3%	85.2%	84.7%	-0.5%
Virginia	79.9%	80.4%	78.7%	79.9%	80.6%	82.3%	80.5%	81.8%	1.3%
Washington	94.2%	95.2%	96.3%	96.4%	96.5%	96.4%	97.6%	97.5%	-0.1%
West Virginia	75.8%	84.9%	88.5%	89.6%	89.5%	87.0%	82.1%	84.9%	2.8%
Wisconsin	72.4%	73.3%	75.4%	75.3%	74.2%	73.8%	79.2%	79.0%	-0.2%
Wyoming	70.1%	NA	63.5%	72.2%	68.6%	67.6%	78.9%	82.6%	3.7%
<b>Nationwide*</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>-1%</b>
Puerto Rico	90.1%	92.5%	92.7%	92.1%	92.8%	92.3%	NA	91.9%	
American Samoa	NA	NA	NA	NA	55.7%	60.0%	73.0%	77.0%	4%
Guam	NA	NA	NA	81%	85.0%	80.0%	85.0%	81.0%	-4%
Northern Mariana Islands	NA	NA	NA	80%	89.8%	84.6%	80.9%	93.7%	12.8%
U.S. Virgin Island	NA	NA	80.2%	NA	82.3%	85.6%	86.4%	85.6%	-0.8%

**Note:** Rates in jurisdictions with primary belt enforcement during the calendar year of the survey are shaded.

\*The "nationwide" rates are from NHTSA's National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS).

NA: No rate reported.



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration**

This issue of Crash•Stats was written by Yuan Yan Chen, a mathematical statistician at NHTSA, and by Tony Jianqiang Ye, a statistician employed by Bowhead Systems Management Inc., working with NHTSA. For questions regarding the information presented in this document, please contact [yuan.chen@dot.gov](mailto:yuan.chen@dot.gov). Internet users may access this Crash•Stats and other general information on traffic safety at <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/cats/index.aspx>.