

FAQs on Seatbelts in Cars, LCVs and HCVs

What is the law on seatbelts? Where a seatbelt is fitted, it must be worn. The relevant legislation falls under [Compulsory Use of Safety Belts and Child Restraints in Motor Vehicles Regulations 2006](#) (S.I. No. 240/2006).

Are there exemptions (exceptions) from having to wear a seatbelt e.g. for medical conditions? Yes. But only if the person holds a certificate from a registered medical practitioner excusing them from having to wear a seatbelt or if they are wearing a disabled person's belt (e.g. if in a wheelchair). Other exemptions include; driving instructors and driving testers during a lesson or a driving test, and members of An Garda Síochána or members of the Defence Forces in the course of their duties.

What is the difference between a 3 point (diagonal) and 2 point (lap) seatbelt?

A 3 point seatbelt (also known as a diagonal seatbelt) is the most commonly used seatbelt in cars today and comes across the driver's shoulder and lap to buckle at the side. A 2 point belt (also known as a lap belt) goes across the lap only. These are commonly found in buses/coaches.

Are lap belts legal? Yes. There is no law against the use of lap belts (i.e. 2 point belts) however the RSA always strongly recommends 3 point belts, which are safer, unless the seat is side facing. Please refer to the table below for specific safety belt requirements for cars, LCVs and HCVs.

What about older vehicles which have no seatbelts. Do I have to get seatbelts fitted? No. There is no legal requirement to fit seatbelts in vintage vehicles if they were not originally manufactured with them. However, the RSA strongly recommends that safety belts be fitted to such vehicles for your own safety. Please refer to the table below for clarification on the vehicle age limits and seatbelt requirements.

What is the law on transporting children in vehicles? All children under 150cms in height or 36kgs (79lbs) in weight must use a child restraint system (CRS) suitable for their height and weight while travelling in a car or goods vehicle (other than a taxi or bus). For further information please click [here](#).

Where can I find more information on which child car seat (child restraint system) to buy/use? The RSA has detailed information in its Child Safety in Cars [booklet](#). Page 45 of the [Rules of the Road](#) booklet also covers 'Child Restraint Systems' in great detail. Alternatively you can contact our Road Safety Education & Research Section on (096) 25006.

Do school bus operators or taxis have to provide child car seats / booster seats? No, legally they are not required to supply child car seats. Please view our [FAQ Note on Seatbelts in \(School\) Buses](#), for more information.

What laws apply to transporting of children in recovery vehicles? The same laws apply as with all other vehicles. Children can be transported in a recovery vehicle provided they are fitted with suitable car seats (where appropriate) and if sitting in front, airbag should be de-activated. You may wish to refer to our FAQ on [Seatbelts in School Buses](#).

Can I fit angel/buckle guards on seatbelts for a child with special needs? The RSA is not aware of any legislation that would prevent the use of such a device, as long as it's installed in line with the manufacturer's guidelines and does not interfere with the effectiveness of the restraint system fitted by the manufacturer.

Are seatbelts checked at the roadworthiness test? (i.e. CVRT, LCVT, NCT) Yes. Please note that where seatbelts are fitted they will be checked to ensure they are safe - regardless of the age of the vehicle and whether the seatbelts are legally required to be fitted or not. If seatbelts have been retrofitted, you may be asked to present seatbelt certification or a modifications report at the test.

What are the regulations on having boot seats in a vehicle? If fitted by original manufacturer it should be type approved and therefore meet all legal and safety requirements. If however they've been added post manufacture, this is considered to be a modification and should be certified by an Suitably Qualified Individual. For further details refer to FAQ on [Modifying/Converting a Vehicle](#).

Where can I get seatbelts certified? Please contact the National Standards Authority of Ireland ([NSAI](#)) who have a [list of Approved Test Centres](#) authorised to check and certify seatbelts.

Will my vehicle fail the roadworthiness test if it doesn't have the right seatbelts fitted? Yes. The following table outlines which seatbelts are legally required to be fitted to each vehicle type, depending on their age.

| Vehicle Age (Date of first Registration) | Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCVs) | Light Commercial Vehicle (LCVs) | Cars |
|---|--|--|--|
| Before 1 st June 1971 | No seatbelts required | No seatbelts required | No seatbelts required |
| On or after 1 st June 1971 | Must have a 3 point safety belt provided for the driver and front outer* passenger seat. | A lap and diagonal type / 3 point safety belt must be provided for the driver and outer* front seat. | Lap and diagonal type safety belt must be provided for the driver and front outer* passenger seat |
| On or After 1 st January 1992 | All outer* forward facing front seats must be provided with a lap and diagonal type safety belt and all other forward facing front seats must have a lap and diagonal or lap type safety belt. | All outer* forward facing seats must be provided with a lap and diagonal type safety belt and all other forward facing seats are provided with a lap and diagonal or lap type safety belt. | All outer* forward facing seats are provided with a lap and diagonal type safety belt and all other forward facing seats are provided with a lap and diagonal or lap type safety belt. |
| On or after 20 th October 2007 | All new HGV's/Buses must be fitted with <i>type approved</i> restraints (e-marked) on driver and passenger seats. | All forward facing seats are provided with three point or lap type safety belts. | All driver and passenger seats are provided with three point safety belts. |

* Seats nearest the door

