

Press Release: CarInsurance.com's survey shows 72% of drivers ride with their pets

The majority of motorists hit the road with their pets as passengers but few drivers employ animal safety measures, according to a new survey.

Sept. 21, 2015 (Foster City, Calif.) – Seventy-two percent of drivers bring their pets along for the ride, but most don't use restraints to keep their furry friends safe, according to a new survey.

CarInsurance.com in February asked 1,000 drivers if they have pets that ride as passengers (722 said they do), what type of animal they own, if they restrain their pets while in the car and if they have had an accident due to a pet distraction.

Here are the key findings among drivers who take their animal companions with them on the road (respondents could choose more than one answer):

- 93 % of drivers have dogs in the car
- 19 % ride with cats
- 36 % of drivers let their pets sit in their laps
- Several drivers wrote in that they travel with parrots, parakeets, rabbits, ferrets and fish

Of the drivers who choose to cruise with their pets, most also let them roam around the vehicle:

- 40 % use a restraint "sometimes"
- 33 % said they "always" restrain their pets
- 27 % "never" use restraints

“Given how few drivers use animal safety restraints, it's not surprising that 14 percent of the drivers who travel with their pets said they've been in an

accident or had a 'near miss' due to their pet distracting them," said Michelle Megna, managing editor of CarInsurance.com.

When the fur flies, are you covered?

If you get into an accident while traveling with your pet, your car insurance comes into play. Your liability insurance will pay for damage to the other driver's car and for others' injuries if you crash while driving with your pet. This is true even if your pet distracted you and you did not have it restrained. To have your own car fixed you must have bought optional collision coverage.

You would have to pay for medical care for your pet if it's injured during an accident you caused. If the other driver is at fault, you can make a claim against the driver's property damage liability coverage to cover your pet's vet bills.

"Some car insurers do offer pet coverage under the collision portion of your policy," says Megna. "Coverage levels vary dramatically, but the average is typically between \$1,000 and \$2,000, which may not be nearly enough to pay for vet bills if there are serious injuries."

Safe pet travel tips

To prevent your pet from being hurt while riding in the car, animal safety experts recommend you use a harness, crate or restraint.

Subaru of America and the nonprofit consumer advocacy group Center for Pet Safety (CPS) first teamed up in 2013 to test pet-safety harnesses and just released test results for crates, carriers and the connectors they use.

"We advise pet owners to secure their dog using any brand that is Center for Pet Safety Certified," says Lindsey Wolko, CPS founder. "We independently test harness and crate products and if they meet our published standard, they are awarded a badge to use on their packaging to help pet owners identify the best brands on the market."

The CPS certified the Sleepypod Clickit Sport harness and the Gunner Kennels G1 Intermediate with 8' Tie Down Straps was just named the 2015 Top Performing Crate by CPS and Subaru.

Methodology: CarInsurance.com commissioned an online survey of 1,000 drivers over age 18. The survey was fielded in February 2015.

About CarInsurance.com

CarInsurance.com, an independent quote comparison website, has been offering drivers expert advice about the different types of car insurance and how to shop for them since 2003.

Using a combination of industry expertise and information drawn from thousands of online quotes delivered without obligation each month, CarInsurance.com is a source for unbiased answers and data about what consumers should expect from an insurance policy.

The site lets consumers compare multiple car insurance quotes online, find [average car insurance rates](#) for nearly every ZIP code in the country and purchase a policy online in minutes.

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Press Contact:

For public relations inquiries, please contact:

Public Relations

pr@carinsurance.com