



Direct Line & Brake Reports on Safe Driving

Are you ready to drive?



HEAD RESTRAINTS



Produced by:



Working in partnership with:



direct line

About this report This is a survey report on safe driving, by Brake and Direct Line. Brake publishes regular survey reports throughout the year under the following topics:

- Are you ready to drive?
- Fit to drive
- A risky business
- Speed
- Driven to distraction

The reports are based on a survey of 1,000 drivers, conducted by an external research agency, Surveygoo. For further reports in the series, visit www.brake.org.uk/safedrivingreports

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HEAD RESTRAINTS



HEAD RESTRAINTS

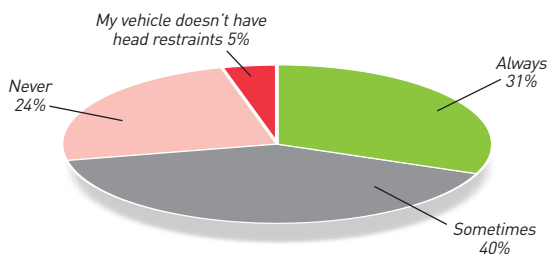
Q1: Before setting off on long journeys, do you always make sure your head restraint and those of any passengers are properly adjusted for safety?

Only a third of people always check their head restraints before a long journey. This means that they are putting themselves and their passengers at risk of potentially debilitating whiplash injuries.

Of those who say they know the height for their head restraint:

- Always 31%
- Sometimes 40%
- Never 24%
- My vehicle doesn't have head restraints 4%

Figure 1: Before setting off on long journeys, do you always make sure your head restraint and those of any passengers are properly adjusted for safety?



ADVICE FOR DRIVERS: WHIPLASH AND HEAD RESTRAINTS

- Head restraints are designed to prevent whiplash injuries. These occur when a person's head is thrown forward, backwards or sideways in a collision.
- Symptoms of whiplash include neck pain, stiffness, and reduced neck movements¹. Between five and 20% of whiplash cases develop into a long-term and potentially debilitating, condition². This can involve long-term chronic pain, the loss of mobility in the neck or arms, and psychological problems. For more details of the symptoms and treatment, visit NHS Choices.
- Head restraints are an important way of preventing whiplash injuries – provided they are properly adjusted. They should be adjusted so that they are as high as the top of your head, and as close to your head as possible.

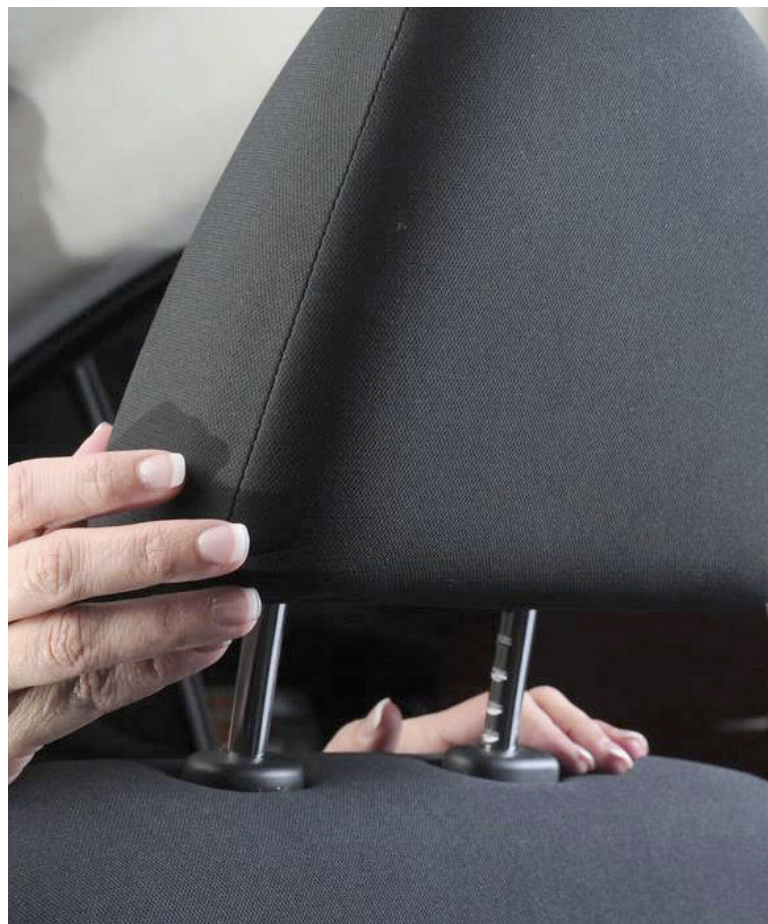
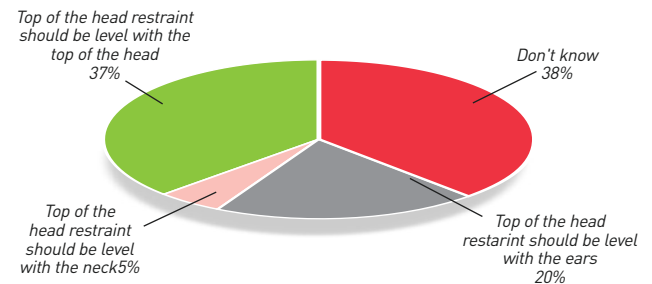
Q2: What is the correct height for a head restraint?

The correct height for a head restraint is that the top of the head restraint should be level with the top of the head. Yet only 37% of drivers were aware of this. This means that many drivers potentially have their head rests incorrectly positioned, limiting their effectiveness in the event of a crash.

Of those who say they know the height for their head restraint:

- Don't know 38%
- Top of the head restraint should be level with the ears 20%
- Top of the head restraint should be level with the neck 5%
- Top of the head restraint should be level with the top of the head 37%

Figure 2: What is the correct height for a head restraint?



End notes

- ¹ Whiplash, NHS Choices
- ² Reigning in whiplash: better protection for Europe's car occupants, ETSC, 2007