

Talking Points



5-Star Safety Ratings

More Stars. Safer Cars.

Program Overview

- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) mission is to save lives and prevent deaths and injuries on our highways.
- In addition to setting and enforcing safety performance standards, we investigate safety defects in motor vehicles.
- NHTSA has test-crashed vehicles for more than 30 years to help consumers make informed decisions when purchasing or leasing a new or used vehicle.
- All vehicles sold in the U.S. must meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

Changes to the 5-Star Safety Ratings System

- The new ratings for 2011 models and beyond include more rigorous tests. The new system will help consumers choose safer cars to purchase or lease and make it easier to compare models.
- Safety technology should be a major factor when purchasing a vehicle. The harder the testing, the safer the car.
- The 5-Star Safety Ratings System evaluates the safety of vehicles ranging from 1 to 5 stars, with 1 star being the lowest and 5 stars the highest.
- The 2011 model year vehicles rated under the new system include: 24 passenger cars, 20 sport utility vehicles, 2 vans, and 9 pickup trucks.
- Changes to the ratings system include: side pole testing, using different sized test dummies, collecting more crash data, offering a single *Overall Vehicle Score* per vehicle, and highlighting new high-tech crash avoidance features

such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC), Lane Departure Warning (LDW), and Forward Collision Warning (FCW).

- The *Overall Vehicle Score* combines the results of a frontal crash test, side crash tests, and rollover tests and compares those results to the average risk of injury and potential for vehicle rollover of other vehicles.
- The crash test dummies now include small-sized adult females and medium-sized adult males providing further precision in crash tests. It helps to demonstrate how people of different sizes are affected in the event of a crash.
- Injury data is also being collected on additional areas of the body, including head, chest, neck, and legs.

Advantages of 5-Star Safety Ratings System

- The 5-Star Safety Ratings System raises the safety bar for all manufacturers and educates car buyers about auto safety features.
- The new system provides an easily understood *Overall Vehicle Score* for the first time, and will also include information about whether vehicles offer advanced safety features, such as forward collision warning systems.

SaferCar.gov

- SaferCar.gov, the official website for the Federal government's 5-Star Safety Ratings System, is a comprehensive site providing consumer information about safe driving tips, defects, recalls, and passenger safety.



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

Safety starts here.

safercar.gov



Safety Sells Resources for Dealers

- NHTSA will begin by testing the most popular vehicles on the market, or those with advanced safety features. Not every vehicle will be tested, but all vehicles sold in the U.S. are certified by the manufacturer to meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.
- The Monroney label (window sticker) lists price, safety, fuel economy, and domestic content to help consumers make educated car-buying decisions. Monroney labels for 2012 and beyond will be updated to reflect the new 5-Star Safety Ratings.
- Since the new and old ratings are based on different test conditions, test dummies, and injury criteria, 2010-prior ratings and 2011-future ratings should not be compared. Due to more vigorous testing, a vehicle that once received 5 stars under the old system may receive a lower score under the new system, even if no changes have been made to the model.
- Auto safety has evolved from crash test dummies and seat belts to offering drivers high-tech safety features that can help avoid crashes all together. Dealers can access promotional templates to educate car buyers about the new 5-Star Safety Ratings System at SaferCar.gov.



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

Safety starts here.

safercar.gov

