

Crates are also popular methods of containing dogs in automobiles. Placing crates near the center of the vehicle is best. Avoid putting your crates in the back of the vehicle since this is the area most likely to get crushed if the vehicle is rear-ended. In a van, if there is nothing between the crate and the back of the seats, it can become a deadly flying object in the event of a front impact. Crates should be secured to the floor of the vehicle to keep them from flying around in the event of a roll over accident. Hard-sided crates such as those approved for use on airlines and made of plastic are the safest. Soft crates should be used only as a last resort because they offer no ‘crush’ protection and are nearly impossible to secure to the vehicle.

If a door of your vehicle was jammed, could you still get the dog out? Be sure that if you use a crate, you don't limit the dog's exit to only one door. We've heard so many horror stories about things that have happened to dogs while they were in crates during a car crash, that we prefer and promote the use of seat belt restraints, over crating, as a method of keeping your dog safe.

The important thing is that you do use some form of restraint system to keep your dog safe in the car. It will help the dog stay in the seat during curves, swerves, corners, sudden braking, or sudden acceleration. Older dogs, in particular, have poorer muscle tone, and buckling them in makes it easier for them to maintain equilibrium during these changes in velocity.



Panda, DSA, wears her Roadie seatbelt harness on a boat ride. It easily unhooks from the car to be used as a walking harness.

Dog Scouts of America is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote responsible dog ownership and the importance of the human-canine bond. Local Dog Scout Troops spread the message through public demonstrations, community service and role modeling. If you'd like to learn more, visit the Dog Scouts of America web site:

www.dogscouts.org

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Dog Scouts of America Presents Tips for responsible pet parenting:

SAFE CAR TRAVEL WITH YOUR DOG



Bear, DSA, rides in the back seat wearing the C.A.R.E. harness attached to a panic snap.

We love and value our pets like cherished family members. We buckle up for safety when we drive or take our kids out in the car, and yet many of us do not do the same for our beloved dogs.

For years, we thought that we were doing all that we could to be responsible pet parents. Then Dog Scouts started researching pets in automobile accidents and the use of seat restraint systems. The results were shocking, and opened our eyes wide. DSA now encourages everyone who travels with an animal to safely restrain the pet within the vehicle.

