

## Press Release

How dogs ride safely in the car

### **Four-legged friends need restraint systems**

- Braking and swerving can lead to injuries
- Forces of several times the body weight
- Train your dog to safely get out of the car

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**Dogs are among the most popular pets. When their owners are out and about in their cars, it goes without saying that dogs are often with them. The accident experts at DEKRA warn against taking animals unsecured in the vehicle.**

“Even a sudden braking or evasive maneuver can injure a dog without sufficient securing, possibly even become dangerous for the car occupants and lead to an accident,” warns Stefanie Ritter, accident researcher at DEKRA. “Just as with humans, who should wear seat belts as a matter of course in cars, we must also think about appropriate restraint for dogs or other animals.”

Even at low speeds, injuries can otherwise occur. For example, if a dog is riding unsecured in the back seat or passenger seat, it can be thrown against passengers or hard vehicle components such as backrests or doors during a sudden braking maneuver. “Forces equivalent to many times its body weight occur,” Ritter warns.

#### **Animals in the car must not interfere or distract**

If the animal is sitting unsecured in the passenger seat, there is also the risk that it will react in panic during an evasive maneuver, jump toward the driver, block the steering wheel or pedals, or take away their view. This can easily lead to an accident. “Anyone transporting a dog in a car must always accommodate it in such a way that it cannot obstruct or distract the driver,” says the accident researcher.

She also can't condone dog owners letting their pet ride in the passenger footwell. “The temptation here is great for the driver to look at the animal more often, perhaps also to pet it, feed it or pamper it – all things that distract from road traffic and can become a danger.”

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## **Restraint systems are indispensable**

In the view of the accident expert, suitable restraint systems are essential for humans and animals to travel together safely. Whether basket, safety belt, dog seat, transport box or trunk with separating grid: which system is most suitable in individual cases, depends strongly on the size, the preferences and also the history of the dog as well as on the vehicle which is being used. It is important that the system is properly secured and fastened in the car. Moreover, with a non-slip pad you can avoid that the dog slides back and forth while driving. In addition, car seats or trunks are protected.

The accident researcher sees optimal protection in all restraint systems that give the dog a good hold during various driving maneuvers, are comfortable for the animal and ensure that the dog does not have to be supervised. They protect the animal from injury, and they prevent the driver from being encumbered by an irritated or excited animal. In the event of an accident, securing the dog precludes endangering rescue workers when the dog may be trying to protect its owner.

DEKRA accident researcher Stefanie Ritter further recommends training the dog in terms of getting out of the vehicle. "It must not jump out of the trunk box or the interior immediately upon opening it, possibly running onto the roadway and thereby endangering itself and others."

## **About DEKRA**

*DEKRA has been active in the field of safety for almost 100 years. Founded in 1925 in Berlin as Deutscher Kraftfahrzeug-Überwachungs-Verein e.V., it is today one of the world's leading expert organizations. DEKRA SE is a subsidiary of DEKRA e.V. and manages the Group's operating business. In 2022, DEKRA generated preliminary sales totaling almost EUR 3.7 billion. The company currently employs over 48,000 people (as of 30.09.2022) in approximately 60 countries on all continents. With qualified and independent expert services, they work for safety on the road, at work and at home. These services range from vehicle inspection and expert appraisals to claims services, industrial and building inspections, safety consultancy, testing and certification of products and systems, as well as training courses and temporary work. The vision for the company's 100th birthday in 2025 is that DEKRA will be the global partner for a safe, secure, and sustainable world. With a platinum rating from EcoVadis, DEKRA is now in the top one percent of sustainable businesses ranked.*