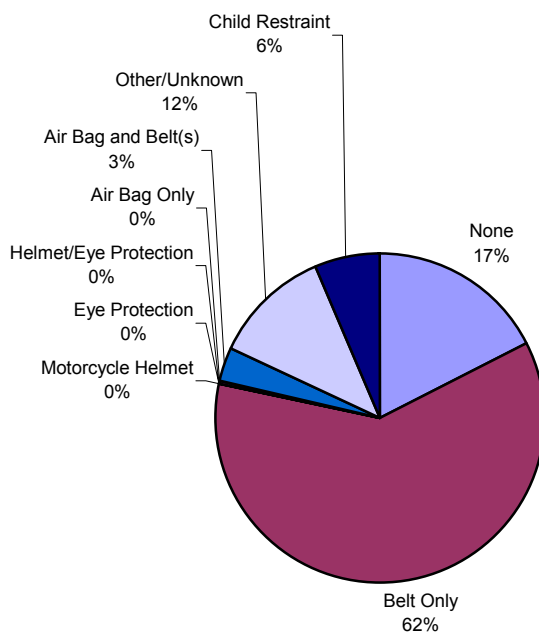


## Chapter 9 - OCCUPANTS

A total of 69,608 motor vehicle occupants (i.e., passengers) were involved in traffic crashes in 2000, comprising approximately 27% of all persons involved in such crashes. Of all motor vehicle fatalities, 137 (22.2%) were occupants.

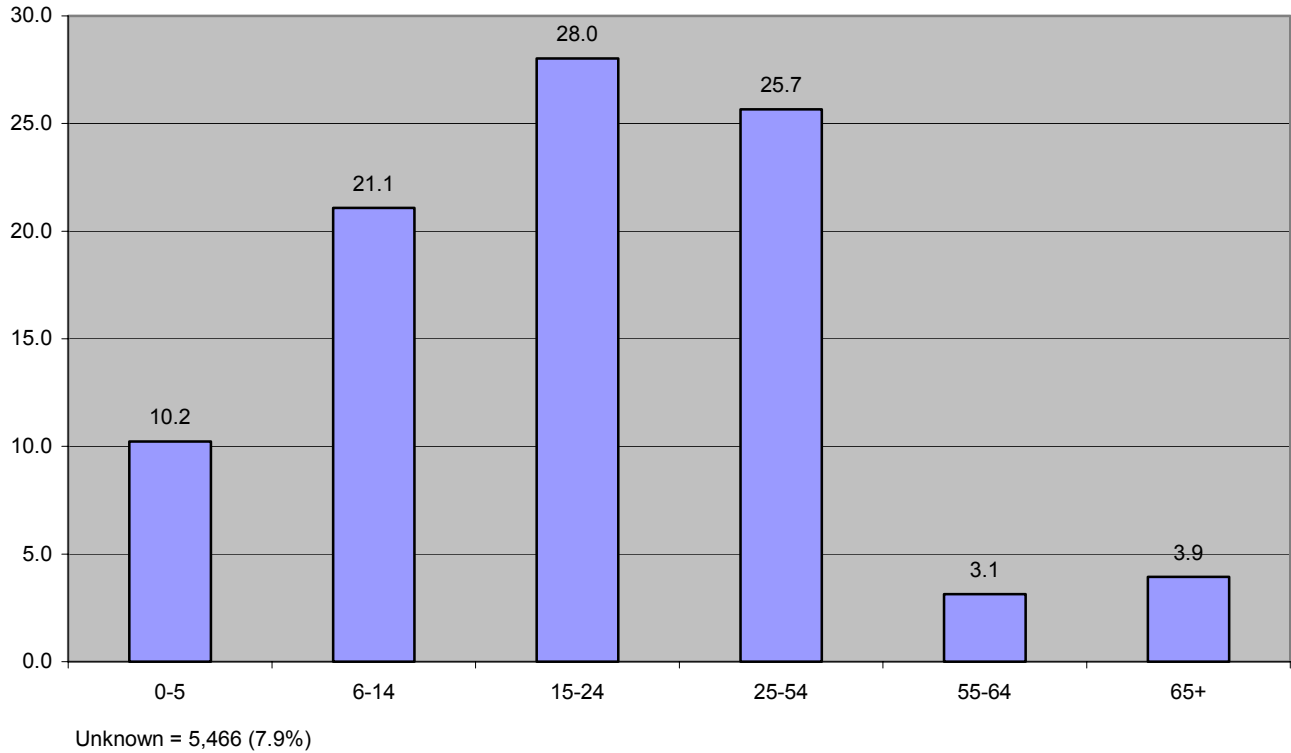
Individuals under 21 years of age accounted for 46% of all occupants injured in a traffic crash and 37% of all occupant fatalities. However, the fatality rate for occupants under 21 years of age (14.1 per 10,000 population) was much lower than that for occupants aged 65 years or older (76.1 per 10,000).

**Figure 9a - Occupant Safety Equipment Use  
(n = 68,922)**



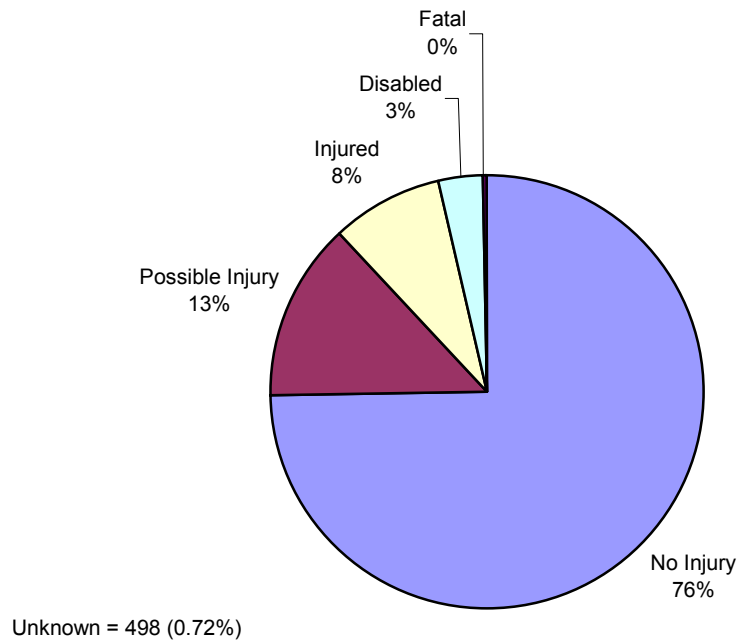
According to police reports, close to two-thirds of drivers were reported to be using seat belts and the air bag (with or without belts) deployed for 3% of drivers (Figure 9a). Only 17% of drivers involved in crashes were known to have no safety equipment. Safety equipment usage was unknown for 12% of occupants.

**Figure 9b - Age Distribution of Occupants  
(n = 68,922)**



The distribution of all occupants involved in a reported traffic crash is displayed in Figure 9b. Age was not known for almost 8% of occupants. Based on the age groups shown, most occupants were 15 to 24 years old. Upon closer inspection, it can be seen that 31% of the occupants were under age 14 and only 7.0% were 55 years of age or older.

**Figure 9c - Occupant Injury Severity  
(n = 68,922)**



Pictured in Figure 9c is the injury severity distribution of the 68,922 occupants involved in a motor vehicle crash. Close to two-thirds of all occupants involved in a crash were reported to be free of injury. While approximately one-half of occupants were male (data not shown), a higher percentage of females than males were injured in a nonfatal crash (28.5% vs. 22.0%). However, the fatality rate was the same for both men and women.