

**Press Release: 2005 Buying a Safer Car**  
**From: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

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**ROLLOVER RESISTANCE RATINGS**

Rollover resistance ratings measure the chances that your vehicle will roll over if you are involved in a single-vehicle crash. A single-vehicle crash is one that does not involve another vehicle. Vehicles with a higher number of stars are less likely to roll over if involved in a single-vehicle crash. Keep in mind these ratings do not directly predict the likelihood of a single-vehicle crash.

Driver behavior, speeding, distraction and inattentiveness play a significant role in rollover crashes. Almost all vehicles involved in a rollover somehow lost control, ran off the road and struck an object such as a ditch, curb, guardrail or soft soil, causing the wheels to “trip” on the object and the vehicle to roll over. Therefore, one of the best ways to avoid a rollover is by staying on the road. Vehicles equipped with Electronic Stability Control (ESC) can help drivers stay on the road in emergency situations.

The rollover resistance rating is based on: 1) an at-rest laboratory measurement known as the Static Stability Factor (SSF) that determines how “top heavy” a vehicle is **and** 2) the results of a driving maneuver that tests whether a vehicle tips up. In short, the rollover rating brings together a measure of how “top-heavy” a vehicle is with how well it performs in a severe turning maneuver on a test track. The lowest-rated vehicles (one star) are at least four times more likely to roll over than the highest-rated vehicles (five stars).

NHTSA’s rollover resistance ratings reflect the real-world rollover characteristics of vehicles involved in more than 86,000 single-vehicle crashes. As with side-impact crash test ratings, you can compare vehicles from different weight classes when looking at rollover ratings.

Rollover crashes have a higher fatality rate than other kinds of crashes. More than 10,000 people die each year in rollover crashes. Keep in mind that even the highest rated vehicle can roll over. By wearing your safety belt you can reduce your chance of being killed in a rollover by about 75 percent.