

15-PASSENGER VAN SAFETY

NHTSA's Top Safety Recommendations for 15-Passenger Van Use



EXPERIENCE Fifteen-passenger vans should only be driven by experienced, licensed drivers who operate this type of vehicle on a regular basis. A commercial driver's license is ideal. It's important to know that 15-passenger vans handle differently than cars, especially when fully loaded.

ATTENTION Stay focused on the task of safe driving by being well rested, never using a handheld phone at the wheel, and limiting conversation with other passengers. Drivers shouldn't drive more than 8 hours per day.

SPEED Always obey the posted speed limit, and reduce your speed as needed based on road or weather conditions. Remember that 15-passenger vans require additional braking time and cannot handle abrupt maneuvers the way cars can.

SEAT BELTS All occupants need to wear seat belts at all times. Inspect seat belts regularly and replace any missing, broken, or damaged belts and/or buckles. An unrestrained 15-passenger-van occupant involved in a single-vehicle crash is approximately four times more likely to be killed than a restrained occupant.

TIRE PRESSURE Inspect the tires and check tire pressure before each use. A van's tires, including the spare tire, need to be properly inflated and the tread should not be worn down. Excessively worn or improperly inflated tires can lead to a loss of vehicle control and possibly a rollover. Check the driver's side door pillar or the owner's manual

for the recommended tire size and pressure. Recommended tire pressure may be different for front and back tires.

SPARES All tires weaken with age—even unused tires; avoid using an old spare on your 15-passenger van. Used 15-passenger vans may come with dangerous spare tires that are many years old. Check a tire's age by finding its Tire Identification Number (TIN) on the tire's sidewall. The last four digits of the TIN indicate the week and year the tire was made (e.g., 1010 = March 2010).

OCCUPANCY Never allow more than 15 people to ride in a 15-passenger van. Fill the seats from front to back: when the van is not full, passengers should sit in seats that are in front of the rear axle.

CARGO Cargo should be placed forward of the rear axle; avoid overloading the van or placing any loads on the roof. See the vehicle owner's manual for maximum weight of passengers and cargo and to determine towing capability.

SIZE A 15-passenger van is substantially longer and wider than a car, and thus requires more space to maneuver. It also requires additional reliance on the side-view mirrors for changing lanes.



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