



## Survey on pet safety

### Methodology

- A total of 800 adult British Columbians who hold a valid British Columbia driver's licence participated in this survey about pet safety. Of the 800 survey respondents, 404 have driven with a pet in their vehicle and qualified to answer the full survey.
- All respondents are members of the Angus Reid Forum and completed the survey online between 25 May and 27 May 2026.

### Key Findings

#### Pet Travel Behaviour

##### ***Over half of B.C. drivers travel with pets***

Slightly over half (57%) of B.C. drivers say they have driven with a pet in their vehicle in the past 12 months. Among those who have done so, frequency varies:

- Daily or almost daily: 11%
- A few times a week: 11%
- A few times a month: 13%
- A few times a year: 12%
- About once or twice in the past 12 months: 11%

16% say they have not driven with a pet in their vehicle in the past 12 months, and 27% say they do not have a pet.

Driving with a pet varies by age. Drivers aged 55 and over (46%) are less likely to report driving with a pet compared to those aged 18–54 (≥ 63%).



### ***Pets are often transported without being secured***

Among those British Columbians who drive with a pet in their vehicle, there is a wide range in how pets are transported or secured in the vehicle:

- 33% say their pet travels *'in a secured crate or carrier'*
- 32% say their pet sits *'on a seat without a restraint'*
- 16% use *'a harness or seatbelt attachment'*
- 15% report their pet is *'free moving in the cargo area or trunk'*
- 13% say *'it varies depending on the trip'*
- 12% separate their pet from the driver *'by a barrier, such as a gate or divider between the front and back seats'*
- 12% report their pet is *'on the passenger's lap'*
- 8% say their pet is usually *'on the floor area of the vehicle'*
- 2% report their pet is *'on their lap while driving'*.

### ***Only a minority of drivers say they always secure their pet while driving***

While roughly one third (36%) of British Columbians who drive with a pet in their vehicle say they always secure their pet, 64% report not always securing their pet while driving:

- 11% say they *'often'* secure their pet while driving
- 12% say they *'sometimes'* secure their pet while driving
- 16% say they *'rarely'* secure their pet while driving
- 24% say they *'never'* secure their pet while driving.

### ***'Short trips', 'Calm Pets', and 'Pets' Dislike of Restraints' cited as top reasons why pet is not always secured while driving***

Among British Columbians who do not always secure their pet while driving, the most common reasons for not doing so include that their *'trips are usually short'* (39%), that their *'pet is calm or well-trained'*



(36%), and their *'pet doesn't like restraints or carriers'* (22%). Notably, roughly a fifth *'haven't really thought about it'* (21%). Other common reasons include:

- *'Not feeling securing their pet is necessary'*: 18%
- *'Wanting their pet to be able to stick its head out the window'*: 14%
- *'The cost of pet safety equipment (such as harnesses, carriers)'*: 12%
- *'Using restraints is inconvenient'*: 8%
- *'Not knowing how to secure their pet properly'*: 8%
- *'Have been meaning to purchase pet safety equipment, but haven't gotten around to it yet'*: 5%
- *'Using restraints takes too much time'*: 2%
- *'Preferring to have their pet on their lap while driving'*: 2%
- *'Some other reason'*: 9%

***Many drivers remain focused while driving with pets, but not all***

One quarter (25%) of British Columbians who drive with their pet report having reached back or turned around to check on their pet. Other behaviours include:

- *'Allowing their pet to move freely around the vehicle'*: 19%
- *'Using one hand to hold or steady their pet'*: 17%
- *'Adjusting or moving their pet during a drive'*: 8%
- Roughly half of British Columbians who drive with a pet in their vehicle say they do not engage in any of these behaviours while their vehicle is moving: 53%.

**Pet Safety Perceptions and Awareness**

***Roughly 1 in 5 British Columbians don't think it's dangerous to drive with an unrestrained pet. This figure rises to a third among drivers who don't always secure their pets while driving.***



- Approximately three quarters of British Columbians (77%) think it's dangerous to drive with an unrestrained pet in the vehicle (30% *Very dangerous* and 47% *Somewhat dangerous*), almost a fifth think it's not dangerous (15% *Not very dangerous* and 4% *Not at all dangerous*), and 4% are *unsure*.
- Notably, of those drivers who *don't always* secure their pet while driving, over half (60%) think that it's dangerous to drive with an unrestrained pet, which is lower than the 77% among all B.C. drivers who believe it's dangerous. Roughly a third (34%) think it's not dangerous, and 6% are not *sure*.

**Most drivers who don't secure pets are aware of the risks**

- Over three quarters (80%) of British Columbians who drive with a pet in their vehicle say they are aware of information or advice suggesting that unrestrained pets in vehicles can distract drivers or increase the risk of injury to people or pets in a crash (39% 'Very aware' and 41% 'Somewhat aware'); one fifth (20%) are not aware (15% 'Not very aware' and 5% 'Not aware at all').
- Notably, of those who don't always secure their pet while driving, three quarters (75%) continue to do so despite being aware of information or advice suggesting that unrestrained pets in vehicles can distract drivers or increase the risk of injury to people or pets in a crash (27% 'Very aware', 48% 'Somewhat aware', 17% 'Not very aware', 8% 'Not aware at all').

**Unattended Pet Safety**

**About a quarter of British Columbians who drive with a pet have personally left the pet unattended in a parked vehicle**

- Over half of B.C. drivers (57%) say they have seen a pet left unattended in a parked vehicle in the past 12 months.
- About a quarter (24%) of B.C. drivers who drive with a pet in their vehicle admit to personally leaving a pet unattended in a parked vehicle in the past 12 months.
- When asked why they leave their pet unattended in their vehicle, the most common reasons are: 'it was only for a short period of time' (77%), 'the temperature inside the vehicle was



safe for their pet' (70%), they '*cracked or opened the windows*' (66%). Other common reasons include:

- '*Where they were going did not allow pets*': 59%
- '*They did not think it was risky to leave their pet unattended in a parked vehicle*': 42%
- '*They felt their pet would be safer staying inside the vehicle*': 27%
- '*It was inconvenient to take their pet with them*': 11%
- Their '*pet does not get along with people or other animals*': 7%.

