

Redesigned for the 2001 model year, the Mitsubishi Montero has standard side airbags designed to protect drivers' and front passengers' chests. Front shoulder belts include devices to limit belt forces on occupants. Center row seats have child restraint anchorages for use with new child restraint designs to improve fit of the restraints. Antilock brakes are standard.

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has evaluated the crashworthiness of the Montero in a 40 mph frontal offset crash test into a deformable barrier. Head restraint and bumper designs are evaluated separately:

STRUCTURE/SAFETY CAGE: GOOD There was minimal to moderate intrusion into the driver footwell area and minimal rearward movement of the instrument panel.

RESTRAINTS/DUMMY KINEMATICS: MARGINAL Dummy movement wasn't well controlled during the offset test. There was far too much upward movement of the steering wheel, which contributed to the dummy's head bottoming out the airbag and striking the steering wheel. During rebound, the dummy's head contacted the B-pillar.

INJURY MEASURES: LEFT LEG MARGINAL Measures taken from the neck and chest indicate low risk of injury to these body regions. However, the extent of the left tibia/femur displacement and forces on the left leg indicate the possibility of knee and lower leg injuries. Head acceleration was high from the steering wheel contact, but was low from the B-pillar contact.

OVERALL EVALUATION: ACCEPTABLE The driver space was maintained well in the frontal offset crash test. However, there was far too much steering wheel movement, allowing the dummy's head to strike the steering wheel through the airbag. Measures also indicate the possibility of knee and lower leg injuries. Side airbags and new-design child restraint anchorages are pluses.