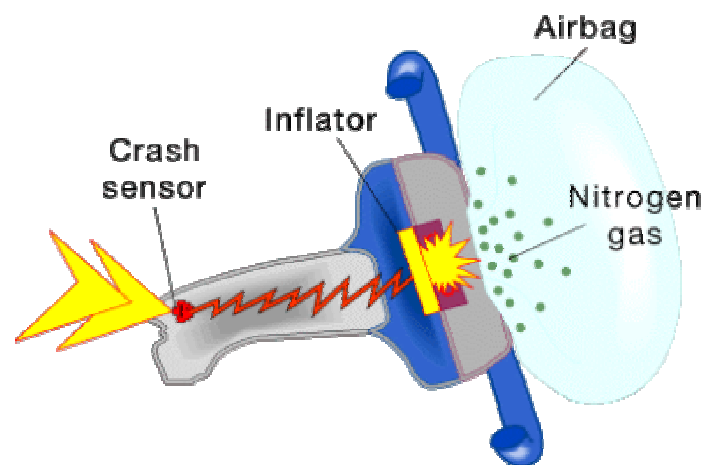




## Airbags. What is their life expectancy?

When airbags started to appear in vehicles in the 1990's manufacturers were not sure of their life expectancy or how long they would be serviceable due to concerns that the chemicals used in the propellant may deteriorate with heat and age.



Volvo and Mercedes-Benz had estimates of between ten and fifteen years originally and with cars built back in the 1990's now coming under scrutiny, as far as safety is concerned, the industry experts are revising their estimates.

Autoliv, the safety specialist, has tested airbags that have been in vehicles under normal operating conditions for up to twelve years and they have performed within specifications.

Owners of vehicles with airbags should check their owners manual regarding individual manufacturers recommendations and check that the warning light is operating correctly.



Many companies do not give recommendations on the life of their airbags but Volvo, who have bought back vehicles from customers and tested them, have changed their recommendation, firstly to fifteen years then to twenty years as they have found the components and chemicals to be stable.

Mercedes-Benz originally stated the airbag should be replaced during normal service at the customer's cost after fifteen years but both Mercedes-Benz and Audi now say the units should last the life of the vehicle.