



# A GUIDE TO CHILD CAR RESTRAINTS

Did you know that more than 90% of child car restraints are installed or used incorrectly?

If things go wrong and a crash happens, this puts children at a **4-6 times greater risk** of severe injury.

To help make sure your children are travelling safely, it's important that they are travelling in a child car restraint which is the right one for their size, is installed correctly, and that it's properly adjusted and fastened to fit them on every trip.



## CHOOSING THE CORRECT CHILD CAR RESTRAINT FOR YOUR CHILD

It's important to remember that the laws outline the minimum requirements for children when travelling in the car. Evidence shows that there is more that can be done above and beyond these minimum requirements to help keep children safe.

We've pulled together some advice below to help you make a safe choice for your family.

### REAR FACING CHILD CAR RESTRAINTS

#### Best practice guidelines

All babies from birth need to use a rearward facing child car restraint when travelling in a car. Rear facing child car restraints provide the head and neck support that babies and young children need, which is why Kidsafe recommends leaving your child in their rear facing child car restraint until they outgrow the maximum size limit (as shown by the shoulder height markers on the child car restraint).

There are a range of different rear facing child car restraints to choose from, including capsules, combination child car restraints and extended rear facing options.



### FORWARD FACING CHILD CAR RESTRAINTS

#### Best practice guidelines

Kidsafe recommends only moving your child from rearward to forward facing when they are the right size to safely do so (as shown by the shoulder height markers on their child car restraint).

There are forward facing child car restraints available (Type G) which allow you to keep your child in an inbuilt harness for longer (until 8-10 years of age, depending on when your child outgrows the maximum size limit).





## BOOSTER SEATS

### Best practice guidelines

Kidsafe recommends only moving your child into a booster seat when they are the right size to safely do so (as shown by the shoulder height markers on their child car restraint).

Different models of booster seat accommodate children up to different sizes, and some can fit children up until they can get good a seatbelt fit. When choosing a booster seat, look for one that will fit your child for as long as possible, especially if your child is tall for their age.



## ADULT SEATBELT

### Best practice guidelines

Even though our children may appear tall in our eyes, most children up until 10-12 years of age will need a booster seat to keep them safe in the car. The risk of serious injury for children who can still fit in a booster seat but don't use one can be up to 3.5 times higher.

Kidsafe recommends only moving your child into an adult seatbelt when they can pass [the 5 step test](#).



## TIPS TO HELP YOU KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE IN THE CAR

- The top tether strap should be attached to the correct child car restraint anchor point in your vehicle, and secured firmly (but not over-tight) with no twists.
- Make sure the harness straps are at the correct height for your child, and that it's adjusted to fit your child correctly with no twists.
- All child car restraints come with colour coded seatbelt paths. Make sure the seatbelt is threaded through the correct path on your child car restraint, and that it's buckled in.
- If you are using ISOFIX, make sure the ISOFIX attachments are connected to the correct anchor points and that they have been adjusted correctly (so that the indicator is green). Seatbelt installation should not be used if you are installing your child car restraint using ISOFIX.
- The headrest on your child's car restraint should sit just above their shoulders, but not touching them.
- It's recommended children under the age of 12 years sit in the back seat of the vehicle.
- Second hand child car restraints should be used with caution.
- It's not safe to use a child car restraint that has been in a crash

