

CHOOSING A CHILD RESTRAINT*



Infants (up to 9kg, about 6 – 9 months)

Always use an approved **rear facing infant restraint**. Keep your child in this restraint until they no longer fit. Never carry your child in your arms or share your seat belt with your child. In a crash you won't be able to hold on to your child. He or she may be thrown around the vehicle or thrown out of the vehicle. The safest way for an infant to travel in a vehicle is in the rear facing position. Keep them in this position for as long as possible and only move them into a forward facing child seat when they no longer fit in the rear facing position.

Young children (9kg up to 18kg, 6 – 9 months to approximately 5 years)

Always use an approved **forward facing child seat**. You may be tempted to move your child on to a booster seat when a new brother or sister comes along or if your child is restless in their child restraint. This is not recommended. Nothing else offers the same level of crash protection for young children as a child restraint. Continue putting your child in the approved seat until he or she is too big for it. This is usually when the child simply will not fit in the seat because of shoulder width or when the child's eyes are above the top of the restraint. Always ensure the harness of restraint fits the child snugly and the child keeps both arms in the harness.



Older children (for children weighing from around 18kg, from about 5 years, until they fit correctly into an adult seat belt at around 145cm tall)



A **booster seat** can improve the seat belt fit when your child is too big for a forward facing child seat and too small for an adult belt. As a general guide, buy a rigid booster seat with a back, side wings and a sash guide to keep the seat belt in place. Use an adult lap/sash seat belt or a child harness in conjunction with a centre rear lap belt. When using a harness, remember to tightly adjust the lap belt first, and then the harness, just removing the slack. The lap belt should always be much tighter than the shoulder harness. A booster with crotch clip can help keep the lap belt in place.

Research findings suggest that children should continue to use a booster seat until good adult seat belt fit can be achieved (about 145cm tall).

Indicators of good adult belt fit include:

- seat belt fits low across the hip bones and not over the soft part of the abdomen
- shoulder or sash strap passes across the outer part of the shoulder, not across neck

When using an adult belt, either alone or in conjunction with a booster seat, do not allow your child to place the sash portion of the belt under their arms or behind their back. Never use a booster seat with a lap only belt alone.

*adapted from the RTA website www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/restraintschildrestraints/childrestraints

* sizes and ages are provided as a guide only

USING A CHILD RESTRAINT

The law requires that all children must be restrained when travelling in a car. Using a restraint that fits your child correctly significantly reduces their risk of injury in a car crash.

To provide the best available protection for a child passenger:

- Use an approved child restraint with the Australian Standards mark.
- Choose the best restraint for your child's size and keep them in this restraint until they no longer fit.
- Use this restraint for every single journey.
- Ensure restraints, including second hand restraints, are fitted and checked by an RTA Authorised Restraint Fitter, and refer to restraint manufacturer's instructions. To find an RTA Authorised Restraint Fitter in your area call Kidsafe NSW on (02) 9845 0890 or the RTA on 13 22 13.



Research indicates that passengers are safer in the rear seat. Where possible, restrain all children in the back seat of the car. Child restraints including booster seats must not be fitted in the front seat of a car fitted with a passenger airbag.