



Installation

Always follow the restraint manufacturer's instructions when installing the restraint and when placing your child in it. Using a restraint which has been incorrectly fitted or is not suitable for your child's size puts your child at a higher risk of serious injury or death in a crash.

If you are unsure how to fit the child restraint or the instructions have been lost, contact the manufacturer or seek advice from an RTA Authorised Restraint Fitting Station. To locate your nearest Fitting Station call 13 22 13.

Choosing the safest restraint for your child

All child restraints and booster seats sold in Australia must comply with the Australian Standard and are marked accordingly. This Standard is one of the most stringent child restraint standards in the world, so child restraints manufactured to this Standard offer good protection in a crash. Even so, the level of protection offered by child restraints that comply to the Standard varies, as does the ease with which they can be correctly used.

Child restraints are available in a range of styles to suit children of different sizes and variations in motor vehicles. Infant restraints can be rented from some maternity hospitals or purchased from department and specialist baby stores.

When purchasing a child restraint or booster seat, consider the crash protection and ease-of-use ratings listed on the 'Safer child restraints' brochure. For a free copy of the brochure which contains additional information on buying a child restraint call 1800 06 06 07.

If you are purchasing or borrowing a second-hand restraint, be VERY CAREFUL. Only use a restraint when you know its history or if it has been obtained from a reliable source. Do not buy or use it if it has been involved in a crash, has worn straps, bent or worn buckles, or the attachment points in the plastic shell are cracked or discoloured. This often occurs because of the age of the restraint, from overloading or exposure to the sun. Child restraints that are more than 10 years old should not be used.

Child safety harnesses

A child safety harness is NOT an inbuilt harness: it is an accessory product that is purchased in addition to a booster seat. A child safety harness is designed to attach to a child restraint anchorage point and is sometimes used by children aged 4 to 10 years with a booster seat or with a lap-only seatbelt.

It is strongly recommended that a booster seat is only used with a lap-sash seatbelt. Recent research recommends using a child safety harness only in situations where it is not possible to replace your lap-only seatbelt with a lap-sash seatbelt. The research does not recommend using a child safety harness as a replacement for a lap-sash seatbelt.

Children aged between 4 and 7 years must not use child safety harnesses alone (without booster seats).

If a situation arises where a child safety harness is required to be used with a booster seat, it is recommended that the booster seat to be used is fitted with an anti-submarining feature to hold the lap part of the seatbelt down low on the child's hips.

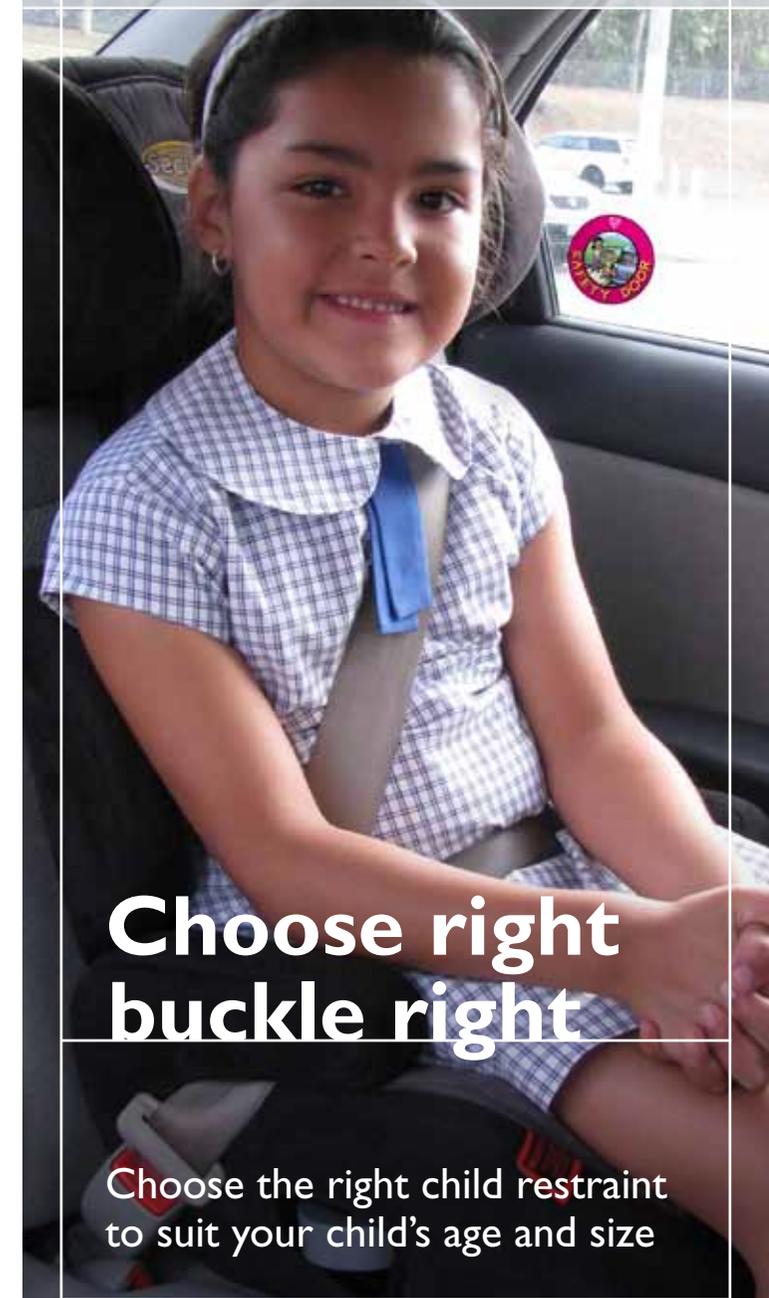
If you are using a child safety harness, ensure that the shoulder straps are not too tight and that the lap part of the belt is very low across the hips, otherwise it may ride up onto the child's stomach. This may cause serious abdominal injury or death to a child in a crash. The harness must be checked for correct fit and adjusted accordingly, every time it is used.

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For further enquiries
www.rta.nsw.gov.au | 13 22 13

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Choose right buckle right

Choose the right child restraint
to suit your child's age and size

The new Safer Child Restraint Rules

Effective from 1 March 2010, children under 7 years of age must be restrained in a suitable and approved child restraint or booster seat when travelling in a car.

- Children under 6 months must be restrained in an approved rearward-facing restraint that is properly fitted to the vehicle and adjusted to fit the child's body correctly.
- Children aged between 6 months and 4 years must be restrained in an approved rearward or forward-facing restraint that is properly fitted to the vehicle and adjusted to fit the child's body correctly.
- Children aged between 4 and 7 years must be restrained in an approved forward-facing restraint or booster seat that is properly fitted to the vehicle and adjusted to fit the child's body correctly.
- Children under 4 years old must not travel in the front seat of a vehicle that has two or more rows.
- Children aged between 4 and 7 years must not travel in the front seat of a vehicle that has two or more rows unless all the other back seats are occupied by children who are also under 7 years travelling in an approved child restraint.



Children under 6 months

Children under 6 months must be restrained in an approved rearward-facing restraint. The restraint is held in place by the seatbelt and the top tether strap. These restraints have an inbuilt harness system.

There are some convertible forward-facing restraints that combine the features of rearward-facing and forward-facing restraints in one child restraint. These restraints accommodate babies from birth in rearward-facing mode and can then be converted to forward-facing when the child is around 6 to 12 months of age. All have an inbuilt six-point harness system.

An infant restraint must be correctly installed and properly adjusted in your vehicle, and the inbuilt harness must snugly fit your baby. If it is not fitted correctly, the restraint may not offer full protection in the event of a crash.

Make sure you have a restraint installed in your car before your baby is born, ready for their first car trip which will probably be on the way home from the hospital.



Children aged between 6 months and 4 years

Children aged between 6 months and 4 years must be restrained in an approved rearward or forward-facing restraint. Once your child has outgrown their rearward-facing restraint (this usually happens from around 6 to 12 months of age) they can be moved into a forward-facing restraint. The forward-facing restraint is held in place by the seatbelt and the top tether strap. The seat faces forward and incorporates a six-point harness.

There are some restraints that combine the features of forward-facing restraints for young children and booster seats for older children. These restraints come with an inbuilt harness and a top tether strap. The harness is used until the child outgrows the harness. This is when the harness straps are too tight and do not fit over the shoulders correctly. Once the child has outgrown the inbuilt harness, it MUST be removed (as per the manufacturer's instruction) and the restraint is used as a booster seat with an adult lap-sash seatbelt.

You will know that your child has outgrown their child seat when their shoulders no longer fit comfortably within the child seat, when their eye-level is higher than the back of the child seat or when the top insertion slots for the shoulder straps are below the level of the child's shoulders.



Children aged between 4 years and 7 years

Children aged between 4 years and 7 years must be restrained in an approved forward-facing restraint or booster seat. Booster seats are used with an adult lap-sash seatbelt and feature high backs and sides which provide protection for children in side impact crashes as well as providing support when a child is sleeping.

Children should travel in a booster seat that is secured by an adult lap-sash seatbelt, never in a lap-only belt.

A booster seat should be used until your child's shoulders no longer comfortably fit within the booster seat or when their eye-level is higher than the back of the booster seat.



Older children 145 cm or taller

It is strongly recommended that children aged 7 years and over stay in their booster seats until they are too big for them. Adult lap-sash seatbelts are designed for people with a minimum height of 145 cm. Lap-sash seatbelts offer greater protection to passengers than lap-only seatbelts, but they must fit correctly. This means that the lap belt is positioned low over the hip and the sash belt sits in the middle of the shoulder and does not touch the neck.

