

How long should my child remain in a child restraint?

Most car seat belts are designed for adults, so children do not fit them properly. The sash (diagonal part of the belt) tends to fall across their head and neck so the belt does not provide the best protection.

To travel safely by car, all children should be seated in the rear seat in an approved child restraint suitable for their size and weight. Road safety experts in Australia recommend the use of child restraints until the child is 26kg or approximately 7 years old.

When will I know when it is time to upgrade my child to the next restraint?

Every child is different, so the following should be used as a guide only.

Changing from a rearward-facing baby restraint into a forward-facing restraint

You should keep your baby in a rearward-facing restraint for as long as possible. When your baby weighs 8-9kg or is approximately 6-8 months old and is able to hold their head up, he or she can use a forward-facing restraint.

Changing from a forward-facing restraint into a booster seat

When your child's eyes are level with the back of the child restraint or their shoulders are too wide to fit in the child restraint, usually when they are 18kg or approximately 5 years of age, you should move them into a booster seat.

Changing from a booster seat to using a seat belt

Once your child's eyes are level with the top of the back seat of the car or the child is approximately 26kg or over, they may use a seat belt. The seat belt, however, must fit your child correctly; ie the lap belt is low over the bony part of the hips (not the stomach) and the sash does not touch their face or neck when all slack is removed.

Where can I get help fitting my restraint?

If you live in NSW you can find your nearest RTA Authorised Fitting Station by calling the RTA Customer Service Enquiry line on 13 22 13.

How should I choose the safest restraint for my child?

By law, every child must use a suitable restraint when travelling in a vehicle. As a parent or carer you should choose the restraint that provides a high level of protection and make sure you use it correctly.

Every year many children are injured or killed in car crashes. Often injuries were caused by the use of an incorrect child restraint (where the child is too young and/or too small for the restraint), or by a restraint being fitted incorrectly.

You should follow the guidelines below to ensure that you are choosing the safest restraint for your child.

- You should always select a child restraint approved to the Australian/New Zealand Standard. These restraints will be marked with the Standards Australia 'tick-mark' and a statement of compliance.
- Child restraints are designed to match a child's height and weight. When you buy a restraint you need to consider:
 - The size and weight of your child.
 - If the restraint will fit in your vehicle.

Keep your child in the most appropriate restraint suitable for their size and age and only move them to the next category of restraint when he or she no longer physically fits.

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when installing a restraint and placing your child in it. Incorrectly using a restraint or using a restraint that is not suitable for your child's size puts your child at a higher risk of serious injury or death.
- 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, for example from age or over exposure to the sun.
- Consider the ease of use ratings.



Remember...

- Using a restraint correctly greatly increases a child's safety during a crash.
- Placing a child in a restraint that is designed for a larger/older child increases the risk of serious injury in a crash.
- In NSW, it is illegal to use a child restraint in the front passenger seat of a vehicle if a passenger airbag is fitted.
- Ensure the restraint is installed correctly. See a restraint fitter if in any doubt.
- Always use the top tether strap where required.
- Teach your child to always keep both arms within the harness system of the child seat or the seat belt of the booster seat.
- When using a seat belt with a booster, ensure the seat belt is correctly fitted over the child's shoulder.
- Move your child into a forward-facing restraint only when they no longer fit into a rearward-facing restraint.
- Move your child into a booster seat only when they no longer fit into a forward-facing restraint.
- Always refer to the manufacturer's instructions.

The child restraints covered by this brochure were the only restraints complying with the AS/NZS Standard at the time of testing.

The testing and production of this brochure have been sponsored by the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA), the NRMA Motoring & Services and the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV).

The test methods and evaluations are available at the following websites:

www.mynmra.com.au/vehicle_safety.asp

www.rta.nsw.gov.au

Brochures available from:

RTA – 1800 060 607 or from the RTA website under myResources

NRMA Motoring & Services – 1300 655 443

RACV – 03 9790 2190 or www.racv.com.au

Brochure produced by



NSW Centre for
Road Safety

For further enquiries

www.rta.nsw.gov.au

13 22 13

Roads and Traffic Authority

The information in this brochure is intended as a guide only and is subject to change at any time without notice. It does not replace the relevant legislation.

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Your guide to buying and using child restraints, including child seats and booster seats

A child that is properly secured in an approved child restraint is less likely to be injured or killed in a car crash than one who is not.

Child restraints can be purchased from retail outlets or hired from some local councils, some maternity hospitals, community groups and from privately run rental companies.

Child restraints available in Australia must meet the Australian/New Zealand Standard 1754:2004 *Child restraints for use in motor vehicles*. This Standard is one of the toughest child restraint standards in the world and child restraints manufactured to this Standard offer good protection in a crash.

A significant number of these restraints have been tested and assessed under the Child Restraint Evaluation Program (CREP).

This brochure provides the results of these tests and guidelines for you to follow when buying a child restraint as well as information regarding the level of safety and their ease of use.

What are the types of restraints available?

Rearward-facing restraints are for babies up to 9kg and less than 70cm in length (approximately 6 months of age). They have an inbuilt harness system.

Forward-facing restraints are designed for young children who weigh from 9kg to 18kgs (approx 6 months to 5 years old). The restraint is held in place by the seat belt and the top tether strap. The seat faces forward and incorporates a six-point harness.

Booster seats are suitable for children between 14kg and 26kg. Boosters with high backs and sides provide support for your child when sleeping. A booster seat should only be used with a forward-facing restraint. Always place the seat belt correctly over your child's shoulder and across their waist to prevent the risk of injury in a crash.

The 'sash' is the diagonal part of the belt that goes across the shoulder. You should buy a booster seat with a sash guide and use it to position the belt comfortably across your child's shoulder.

The 'lap belt' is the horizontal part of the belt that goes across the waist. A child's pelvis can slide under this part of the belt in a car crash, known as 'submarining'. This can cause serious injury. You can buy a booster seat with an anti-submarining clip (ASC) which prevents this occurring.

Never use a booster seat in a seat with only a lap belt fitted.

Convertible restraints are available in two types. The first can be used as both a rearward-facing restraint (birth to about 6 months) and as a forward-facing restraint (about 6 months to 5 years). The second type can be used as a forward-facing restraint and booster seat.

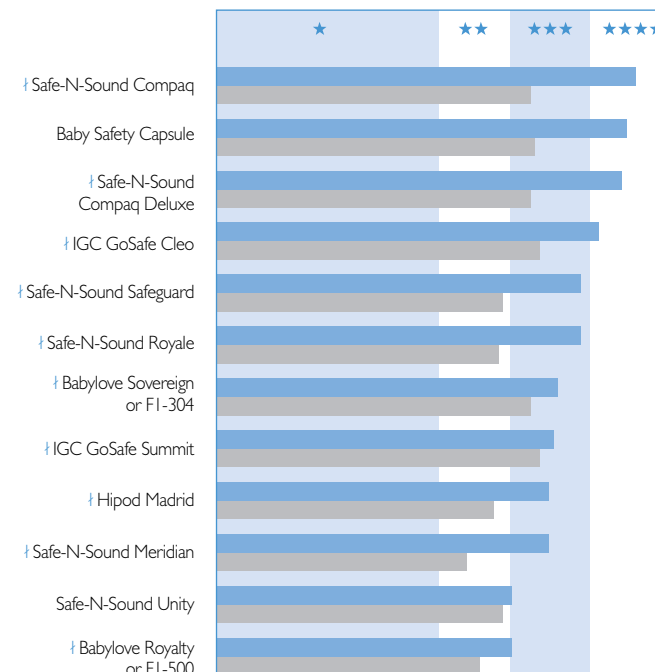
Lap/sash belts should only be used when your child is too big for a booster seat. Keep your child in a booster seat for as long as possible until he or she no longer physically fits. Always make sure you use the sash part of the belt correctly.

TEST RESULTS

The CREP testing and assessment program is based on protocols developed in Australia and North America in order to identify those child restraints that offer the highest levels of safety. The restraints are rated on how well they protect your child in a crash and how easy they are to use. The tables below set out the test results. Injury protection and ease-of-use ratings are each scored by stars.

Rearward-facing restraints for babies

For babies up to 9kgs; 70cm long; from birth to 6 months

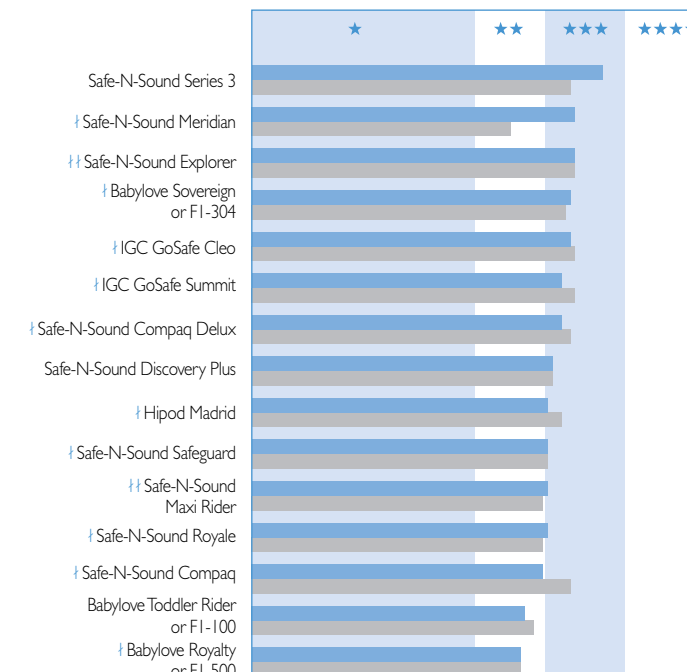


PROTECTION FROM INJURY IN A CRASH

- ★★★★ Exceptional crash protection and well above the AS/NZ Standard requirements.
- ★★★ Good all round crash protection and well above the AS/NZ Standard requirements.
- ★★ Above average crash protection and above the AS/NZ Standard requirements.
- ★ Fully meets the AS/NZ Standard requirements.

Forward-facing restraints for young children

For young children 8-18kgs; from 6-9 months to approximately 5 years

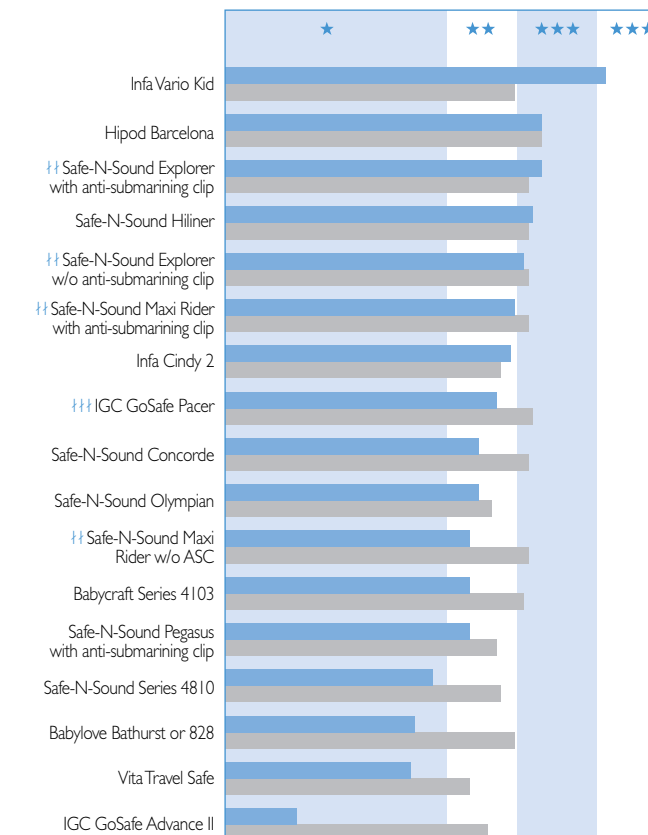


EASE OF CORRECT USE

- (including instructions, labelling, installation and securing the child.)
- ★★★★ Exceptional ease of correct use when compared against the requirements of the AS/NZ Standard requirements.
 - ★★★ Good all round performance in ease of correct use when compared against the requirements of the AS/NZ Standard requirements.
 - ★★ Better than average ease of correct use requirements when compared against the requirements of the AS/NZ Standard requirements.
 - ★ Meets ease of correct use requirements of the AS/NZ Standard requirements.

Booster seats for older children

For children 14-26kgs; until they are large enough to be safely secured by an adult seatbelt



- † Rearward-facing/forward-facing convertible.
- †† Forward-facing/booster seat convertible.
- ††† This device was found to have a top tether adjustment mechanism that was very difficult to use. The manufacturer subsequently changed the design of the mechanism and this assessment applies to Pacer boosters with the new mechanism.



The restraints are tested at the RTA Crash Lab.