

## INSTALLING CHILD CAR RESTRAINTS AND SECURING YOUR CHILD

Once you have selected the appropriate restraint for your child, you need to install it correctly. It is best if you attempt fitting the restraint yourself so that you know how the restraint works, giving you confidence in completing the process. A Child Car Restraint Fitting Service can then assist you to check that the restraint is fitted correctly.



- 1 Read through the **child car restraint user manual** that comes with the restraint. It may seem like a lot of information but it will assist you to keep your child safer. Take the time.
- 2 Learn about how **tether straps and anchorages work**.
  - Tether straps connect an infant restraint, a child seat, tethered booster or harness to the vehicle's dedicated child restraint anchorage points.
  - Anchorages in a vehicle are usually in the form of a bolt with a specially-shaped metal bracket or rod to which the fitting on the tether can be attached. Make sure you check your vehicle manual to confirm the location of the anchorage points.

If your vehicle does not have anchorage points call the Department of Transport on **(08) 9351 1687** about installing them.



- 3 Identify the **seatbelt pathway**.

The seatbelt pathway is usually different for rearward and forward facing restraints. **Check your user manual.**

- 4 Ensure the **harness is fitted firmly and at the right level**.

- Check the eye level of your child is not higher than the top of the back of the restraint.
- Ensure the shoulder straps are at the correct level. This is different for forward facing and rear facing restraints. The straps should sit 2.5cm above or below shoulder level in forward facing restraints, and 2.5cm above or level with the shoulder in rearward facing restraints.
- You shouldn't be able to fit more than one finger between the strap and your child's body. Make sure the straps are not twisted.

- 5 Make sure you **check the restraint every time you use it**.

- Always take the time to get your child comfortably and correctly strapped in.
- Keep an eye on the condition of the restraint.



- 6 Use your child's car restraint for as long as possible before moving to the next stage.

### THE SAFETY DOOR Izzy's special message...



Using the 'safety door' is the safest way for children to enter and exit a car.

The safety door is the rear door that is closest to the kerb or footpath away from the road. Ask your children to wait for you to open the safety door before getting in and out of the car.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

If currently you do not have the appropriate restraint for your child, you can hire or buy child car restraints.

You can hire restraints from:

- private companies
- community service organisations
- hospitals.

If you need advice or help with installation of the restraint, you can visit a **Child Car Restraint Fitting Service**. This service is available throughout Western Australia.



To find your nearest service visit [www.childcarrestraints.com.au](http://www.childcarrestraints.com.au) or call the Child Car Restraint Information Line: 1300 780 713

**Children with disabilities** may require a special seat if they cannot easily use a child seat. For more information, call the **Independent Living Centre of Western Australia** on 1300 885 886 or Kidsafe WA on (08) 9340 8509 \ 1800 802 244.

If you have some questions or would like more information on how to keep young children safe while traveling, please visit [www.sdera.wa.edu.au](http://www.sdera.wa.edu.au)



# YOUR GUIDE TO CHILD CAR RESTRAINTS

Restraints are important. When choosing the right child car restraint it is important that you check your child's size.



Buckle up, every child, every trip

**SDERA**  
SCHOOL DRUG EDUCATION & ROAD AWARE

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## RESTRAINTS ARE IMPORTANT

- Road crashes are a major cause of death and injury for children in Western Australia.
- Using an appropriate child car restraint greatly reduces your child's risk of death or serious injury in the event of a car crash.
- Children must be in the appropriate restraint:
  - even on short trips
  - even when you are driving slowly
  - even when they do not want to.
- If you are pregnant, you should plan to get an infant restraint before you give birth to your baby. Use the restraint to take your baby home from hospital.
- Never allow children to share seatbelts or restraints with adults or other children.
- The back seat is much safer than the front seat.
- It is against the law for children under 7 years to sit in the front passenger seat.

Take the time to talk to your child about the importance of being buckled up.

You must wear a seatbelt too, even when you are pregnant. Young children can learn about safer road safety skills and values through role modelling from their parents and caregivers.



As a parent or caregiver you are able to keep your children safer when they are travelling in a vehicle by learning about selecting and installing the right child car restraint for them.

**Read on to learn more.**

## BEFORE SELECTING A RESTRAINT



Incorrectly using a restraint or using a restraint that is not appropriate for your child's size puts your child at a higher risk of serious injury and death.

- **Safety standards.** Child car restraints must have an Australian Standards mark to be used legally.
- **Your child's size.** Keep an eye on your child's size. There are a number of child car restraints available, and it is important that you choose the restraint that is appropriate and provides the best protection for your child. Check your child's **eye level** is not higher than the top of the restraint back.
- **The age of the restraint.** Child car restraints less than 10 years old are recommended.
- **The history of the restraint** if it is second hand. Do not use a child car restraint that has been in a crash (even if it does not appear damaged), shows signs of wear and tear, crease marks in the plastic or frayed straps. Make sure everything is in working order – the buckle and adjusters must work correctly – and that no pieces are missing.
- **Does the restraint fit your car?** Make sure the child car restraint is the right fit for the model of your car. It is very important for the restraint to be correctly installed.
- **Never fit a restraint with an airbag in front of it.**



Have a look at this table to decide which restraint is most appropriate for your child's size and age.

## TYPES OF RESTRAINTS

|                | Your child's size is most important  | Type of restraint to use  |
|----------------|--|---|
| <b>STAGE 1</b> | <p><b>Age: Birth to 6 months</b><br/>(Up to approx 70cm in length)</p> <p>*Note: Some rear facing restraints are suitable for infants weighing up to 9kg and others up to 12kg. Some rear facing restraints may also have a maximum length limit. Check the manufacturer's instructions.</p> <p>Keep your baby rearward facing for as long as possible; they should be at least 6 months of age, weight at least 8kg and have a good head control before moving to a forward facing restraint.</p> | <p><b>Baby capsule</b><br/>OR<br/><b>Convertible child restraint.</b></p> <p>This is a dual purpose restraint that can be used rear facing for young babies and forward facing for older babies and toddlers. Keep your baby rear facing for as long as possible.</p>     |
| <b>STAGE 2</b> | <p><b>Age: At least 6 months to 4 years old</b><br/><b>8 to 18kg</b></p>   | <p><b>Forward facing restraint</b></p> <p>This is a forward facing chair with an inbuilt harness. A child should not be in a forward facing position until they are at least 6 months old, are at least 8kg and have good head control.</p>     |
| <b>STAGE 3</b> | <p><b>Age: 4 years to 7 years old</b><br/><b>14 to 26kg</b></p> <p>*Note: A combination booster can be used from 8kg to 26kg, as it can be used initially as a forward facing restraint.</p>   | <p><b>Combination seat</b></p> <p>The child is secured in the booster seat by the car's lap/ sash seatbelt or separately purchased child harness.</p> <p>After this point the internal harness is stowed away until the restraint is used as a booster seat with either the adult seat belt or a separately purchased child harness.</p> <p>* Some combination seats require a specific type of child harness – check that you select the correct one.</p>   <p><b>Booster seat</b></p> <p>The child is secured in the booster seat by the car's lap/ sash seatbelt or a separately purchased child harness.</p> <p>A <b>sash locator</b> should be used to ensure correct positioning of the seatbelt across the child's shoulder and chest.</p> <p>A booster with a back and 'wings' (sides) offers the best protection.</p> <p>Some booster seats now have features designed to position the lap section of the seatbelt closely across the child's hips to help prevent them from sliding under the seatbelt.</p>  |

### Reminder

- **Do not wrap your child in a blanket or a rug before you place them in the restraint. After securing your child in the restraint, you may wish to then cover them with a blanket or rug. Check that this does not interfere with your child's breathing.**
- **Do not use a cushion or towel or anything similar as a booster under your child or whilst they are using a harness.**