

the
NEW PARENT'S
GUIDE
to
PRACTICAL
car seat
safety

brought to you by



We are proud to be working with The Wiggles. With their help, we are able to reach more young families with much needed information and advice to keep our little ones safe.

- The InfaSecure Team

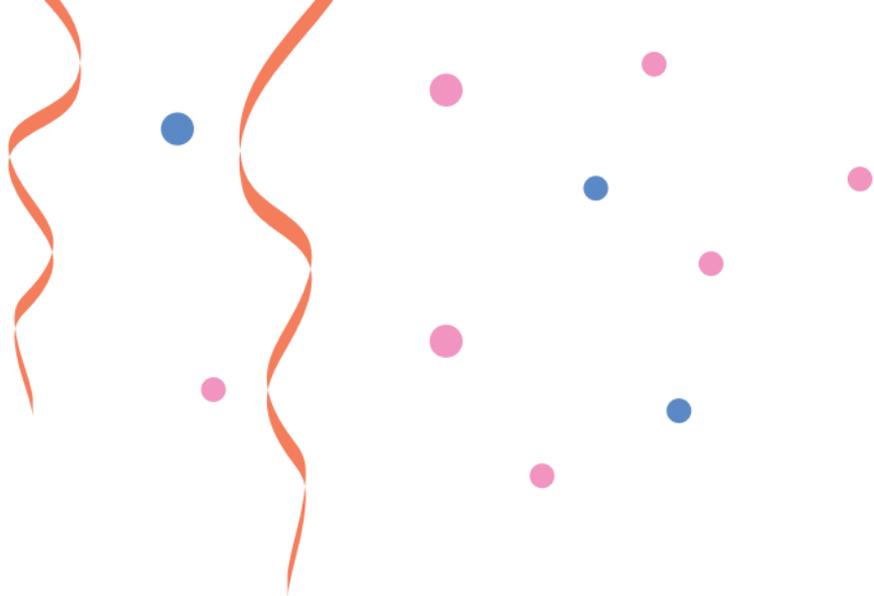
“We love how easy to understand this guide is - no matter what kind of car seat you have or are looking to buy, you'll find information you can use and share with family and friends.”

- The Wiggles



CHILD RESTRAINT SAFETY PARTNER





Congratulations!



You are about to set forth on an amazing journey with your baby, and it's important to make sure they are as safe as they can be while they travel with you.

We're going to explain the most important aspects of keeping baby safe in the car, across three key areas; choosing the right restraint, proper installation, and using it correctly each and every day.

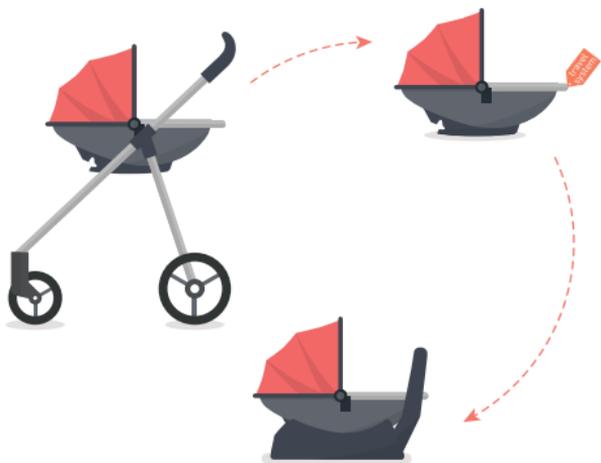


Choosing the Right Child Restraint

Choosing the right child restraint can sometimes seem overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be!

We're spoiled for choice in Australia, thanks to our extremely stringent safety standard. No matter which brand or style of car seat you choose, you can rest assured it's one of the safest in the world.

The most critical feature you need to look for is that your seat is a rearward facing restraint. You're required by law to keep your new baby rearward facing to 6 months, but it's safest to keep them rearward facing for as long as the child restraint allows.



Other considerations should include how it fits in your car (try before you buy) and what your budget allows.

Types of Rearward Facing Restraints

Capsules

Capsules are dedicated rearward facing child restraints. Some Capsules can be detached from a base and attached to a pram (these restraints are sometimes called Travel Systems or Infant Carriers).

Convertible Car Seats

Convertible Car seats start off as rearward facing child restraints. Once baby's shoulder reaches the appropriate marker, the car seat is turned around forward facing, for your now older and larger child.

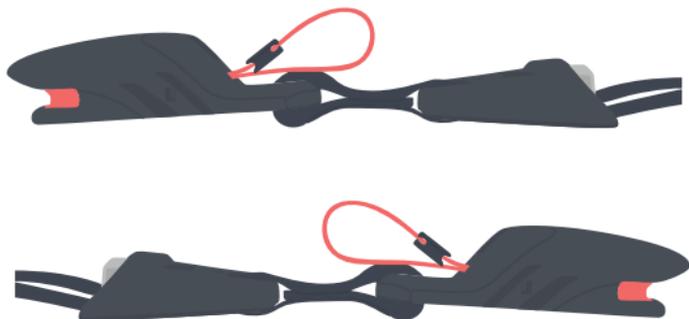


Installing Your Child Restraint

Once you have your child restraint, you need to get it into your car!

Where to install?

Any position on the back seat is safe. Many people choose to install on the curb side, as it's often more practical for getting baby in and out (not to mention more comfortable for you as you recover).



You may want to install the seat in the middle position. Being further from the doors can help in side-impact accidents, however all child restraints sold in Australia feature excellent side-impact protection, and must pass crash tests in 'side-impact with door' configurations.

Types of Installation

Seatbelt Installation

Seatbelt installs are the traditional way to install child restraints in Australia. They use a combination of the car's seatbelt and the child restraint's top tether strap to secure the child restraint in the car.

ISOFix Compatible Installation

ISOFix Compatible car seats can either be installed using lower ISOFix compatible connectors, or with a seatbelt like traditional child restraints. They also require the use of the top tether strap.



Is ISOFix Right for You?

ISOFix is thought to be easier to install, and as a result 'safer' because there's less chance for error. Whether ISOFix Compatible or Seatbelt install, you need to be aware and careful, especially with the day to day use of the child restraint. While ISOFix addresses some of the common installation errors, it also presents a set of new challenges.

Every car is different, and the ease of installation can vary between them quite a lot. The majority of vehicles only allow for two ISOFix compatible car seats across the back seat, which makes 3 across installs almost impossible. ISOFix also generally comes at a slight premium, so you'll need to balance your budget against the pros and cons to decide whether it's right for you and your baby.



Professional Fitting

Many people believe that they must have their child restraints installed professionally – but that’s not the case. Manufacturers supply detailed instructions with every car seat, allowing you to perform the installation yourself. But if you’re not confident, or not sure if you’ve installed your seat correctly, you should contact a child restraint fitter / technician. They can offer a wealth of knowledge and understanding that can easily be lost in the pages of a technical instruction booklet.

Make sure to have them teach you how to do it yourself, for when you need to move or clean the restraint in the future!



Using Your Child Restraint

Rearward Facing

As we've mentioned earlier, we recommend keeping baby rearward facing for as long as the child restraint allows. You're required by law to keep your baby rearward facing until 6 months of age, but many seats on the market allow for much longer than that. The law should be taken as a minimum.

Your baby is safest in a rearward facing position until their body has developed enough to face forwards. Use the shoulder height markers sewn into the cover of your child restraint as a visual guide to know when it's time to turn.



The Harness & Top Tether

The most important part of your child restraint is the internal harness, and how it fits your baby.

The harness needs to sit snug against baby's torso and shoulders. You shouldn't be able to pinch the harness webbing – if you can, the harness needs to be tightened.

The harness should be positioned in the shoulder slots at or above baby's shoulders, never below.

The top tether strap should have all slack removed, but shouldn't be over-tightened. The child restraint lifting off the vehicle seat can be an indication of an over-tightened top tether strap.



Some Final Thoughts

Pay it Forward!

It's important to remember that a lot of other people probably feel the same way you do. If you know someone who is having their first child, pass your knowledge along, send them a copy of the guide, or get them to contact us! Together, we can make this part of becoming a parent a little easier for everyone!



Don't forget to Enjoy!

Bringing a new baby into the world is beautiful, wondrous and supremely rewarding, but it's also a stressful experience, especially the first time around. By following the advice in this guide, you'll be creating the safest travel environment possible for your new baby.

Cut through some of the stress and confusion and focus on more important things, like squishy baby cuddles.

If you have any questions or comments, we're available 365 days a year, and we'd love to hear from you!

Enjoy your new baby!

Sincerely,

The InfaSecure Team

Useful Resources

Child Restraint Evaluation Program

childcarseats.com.au

KidSafe Child Restraint Guidelines

kidsafe.com.au/crguidelines

Helpful Guides and Posts

infasecure.com.au/blog

Ask us Anything!

infasecure.com.au/contact-us



About This Guide

This guide has been written to be as broad as possible, and while the information contained within can be applied to all child restraints designed for newborns in Australia regardless of brand, we recommend you contact your child restraint manufacturer for any specific help with your restraint.

This information has been sourced and vetted by industry experts, including members of InfaSecure's research and development team, and members of the CS85 Australian Standards Working Group. All information is as future-proof as possible, and accurate at time of writing (April 2015).



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