

Child restraints and airbags

Front airbags

- Rear-facing child restraints must always be placed in the back seat if there is a front seat airbag. The back of the rear-facing child restraint is very close to the dashboard (where the airbag comes out) and if the child restraint is hit by the inflating airbag, the child could be seriously hurt or even killed.
- If an older child has to sit in the front, move the vehicle seat as far back as possible.



Side airbags

- Side airbag systems can come out from lots of places – the door, the seat, the roof. If you have to place a child restraint beside the door, make sure there are no toys, blankets or other objects between the child restraint and the door. Encourage your child not to lean out of the child restraint.

Purchasing or hiring

Not all child restraints fit in all vehicles. Try fitting the child restraint in your vehicle before you buy or hire it to see if it fits well.

Child restraint technicians

Retailers and other organisations may have qualified child restraint technicians who can provide you with advice and assistance. Child restraint technicians are assessed and certified against NZ Qualifications Framework standards.

For more information on how to safely use child restraints you can visit the following websites:

- www.acc.co.nz
- www.plunket.org.nz
- www.safekids.org.nz
- www.transport.govt.nz
- www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/factsheets/07/child-restraints.html

Our contact details

For general enquiries and contact information for the NZ Transport Agency please check our website www.nzta.govt.nz or email us at info@nzta.govt.nz

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Child restraints save lives

It is the law that you use one for your child



Stage one Infant restraint or convertible restraint

Points to remember when you fit the infant or convertible restraint in your vehicle



- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- The back seat is the safest place for an infant restraint.
- Never place a rear-facing restraint on the front seat if there is an airbag.
- If your restraint wobbles, try it in another place in the vehicle. A locking clip will help hold the restraint firmly.
- Babies are better protected in a rear-facing restraint until they are at least one year old.

Points to remember when you put your baby in the infant or convertible restraint

- If there is a chest clip, ensure it is at chest level.
- The harness should be firm against your baby and go over the baby's shoulder.
- Any blankets should be put over the baby once the harness is on. Blankets should not be placed under the harness.

Babies have outgrown the restraint when they are over the recommended weight or their head reaches the top of the restraint. Now it is time to move to stage two.

Stage two Convertible child restraint or front-facing child restraint

Points to remember when you place a child restraint in your vehicle

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- The back seat is the safest place for a child restraint.
- If the vehicle has airbags, avoid putting the child restraint in the front seat.
- Put your weight into the child restraint as you tighten the safety belt to help you get a tight fit.
- If your child restraint comes with a tether strap, it must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- The tether strap clips in to a child restraint anchor on the vehicle and holds the top of the restraint in place. In many vehicles the anchor point for the tether is in place – check the vehicle manual. If you do not have one, get one fitted.



Points to remember when you place a child restraint in your vehicle

- The harness should be firm against your child and always go over the shoulders.
- The shoulder harness should be moved up as your child grows. With some convertible restraints, you can use only the top shoulder harness slots when forward-facing.
- If there is a chest clip, ensure it is at chest level.

Your child is safer to remain in a correctly fitted stage two child restraint until they have outgrown it. Do not move them into a booster seat while the stage two seat still fits them.

Stage three Booster seat

Points to remember when using a booster seat



- A booster seat can be used for an older child. Use your child restraint as long as your child fits it as it offers more protection in a crash.
- A booster seat will improve the fit of the vehicle safety belt and raise the child to window level.
- Make sure the diagonal safety belt goes through the guide and over the shoulder, not across the child's neck.
- Never use a booster seat with a lap belt only.

Do you think your child is safe without a booster seat?

Try this simple test to see. (If the answer is no to any of these points, then your child needs to use a booster seat to keep them safe.)

- My child can sit right back on the seat of the car or van with their legs bent comfortably over the edge.
- The shoulder belt comes over their shoulder, not across their neck.
- The lap part of the safety belt stays low against their thighs, not across their stomach.
- They can stay seated like this for the whole trip.