

## Are your kids safe in the car? Checklist.

- Rear-facing car-seat for as long as possible, the **safest** way to travel, a protective cocoon for newborn to older toddler. (Harness straps on or ABOVE the shoulders, **never** below)
- Forward-facing car-seat with in-built harness for as long as possible to protect young growing children. (Harness straps over the shoulders, can be up to 2.5cm above OR below)
- Booster seat with shoulder/lap belt for as long as possible to ensure seatbelt fits correctly for older kids. (Shoulder belt over the shoulder, **not** the neck, lap belt low on the lap, **never** on the tummy, use the seatbelt guides)
- Back seat of the car for as long as possible. Air-bags are dangerous for children in the front seat.
- Harness straps straight and snug, over the shoulders, **not loose, not twisted**. This is your child's safety net in a crash.
- No bulky clothing in car-seats. No blankets or wraps under the harness straps. This makes straps too loose & unsafe.
- Do **not** use a lap only belt to restrain a child. They provide no upper body protection in a crash.
- **Never** wear a seatbelt under the arm or behind the back.
- Car-seat installed correctly, seatbelt buckled, tether strap attached, car-seat not loose. **Read the instruction manual**. Adjust the seat as the child grows. New seats have height markers. Old seats have weight limits. Car-seats must meet Australian Standards. (AS/NZS 1754). Red Five Tick Sticker.
- Car-seats should be less than 10 years old from manufacture date. Car-seats wear out over the years. Their safety is reduced and they should be destroyed and replaced. Don't buy second-hand from unknown sellers.
- Do **not** use car-seats that have been involved in a crash. They are no longer safe and **must** be destroyed.
- H-Harnesses are no longer recommended due to mis-use. Full boosters offer greater protection than cushion boosters.
- Secure all loose items in the car which could cause injuries in a crash. An un-cluttered car is a safer car. Restrain pets.
- **Never** leave children alone in a car. Children can die or become ill quickly when left in hot cars on any type of day.
- Do **not** smoke with children in the car. Protect kids' health.
- Children are safest staying in each stage of car-seat for as **long as possible**, using a seat that **fits them correctly**, is **installed correctly**, and is **used correctly** on **every trip**.

Website: [www.rearfacingdownunder.com](http://www.rearfacingdownunder.com)

Help at: [facebook.com/groups/childrestraints/](https://facebook.com/groups/childrestraints/)

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## Australian Road Rules: Children in Cars

### What type of seat should they use?

Car-seats must meet Australian Standards (AS/NZS 1754).

**Newborn to 6 months:** MUST use a rear-facing car-seat with in-built harness and top tether.

**6 months to 4 years:** MUST use a car-seat with in-built harness and top tether. Can be rear-facing OR forward-facing. Rear-facing is the **safest** option for as long as the child fits. (It is **safe** for feet to touch seat and legs to bend)

**4 years to 7 years:** MUST use EITHER a car-seat with in-built harness OR a booster seat with adult seatbelt. Car-seat with in-built harness is the **safest** option for as long as the child fits. (Seat outgrown when eyes are level with seat top)

**7 years to 16 years:** MUST use EITHER a car-seat, booster seat OR adult seatbelt alone. Car-seat or booster seat is the **safest** option until the child reaches 145cm tall.

It is strongly recommended that children under 145cm tall use a booster seat. Adult seatbelts are designed for adult bodies. Google “**Five Step Test**” for kids to use the adult seatbelt.

### Where can they sit?

Children **under 4 years of age** MUST sit in the back seat of a car that has two or more rows of seats. **Never** place a rear-facing car-seat in front of an active frontal airbag.

Children from **4 years to 7 years** may sit in the front seat of a car that has two or more rows of seats ONLY if all back seats are taken by younger children. If a child from 4 to 7 years of age needs to sit in the front seat, they MUST use an untethered booster seat. Front airbags can injure kids.

Children **over the age of 7** may sit in the front seat HOWEVER it is strongly recommended that children under the age of 12 sit in the back seat. If a child over the age of 7 years needs to use the front seat, they are **safest** using an untethered booster seat until they reach 145cm tall.

The ages stated in the Road Rules are the **bare minimum legal requirement**. For **maximum safety**, keep your child in each stage of seat for as long as they still fit. Moving a child to the next stage of seat too early is a step down in safety which could cause injuries or death in a crash.

Car crashes are the leading cause of accidental injury and death for children in Australia. Most children who are killed or injured in car crashes were not correctly restrained in the car.

You cannot control when a crash will happen, but you can ensure that your children are as safe as possible.

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