

CHOOSING A REARWARD FACING CHILD CAR RESTRAINT

When choosing your rearward facing restraint, there are a few important things to consider, including:

- All child car restraints used in Australia must comply with the Australian Standard AS/NZS 1754.
- The size of the restraint. While you may only need to fit one restraint in the car now, you may need to fit two or more in the future.
- Caution should be taken if you are considering using a second hand restraint—especially if you do not know its history.



POSITIONING OF YOUR REARWARD FACING CHILD RESTRAINT

When considering which seating position to place your rearward facing child restraint in, there are a number of factors to consider, including:

- Where the anchorage points are installed in your vehicle
 - If all seating positions have a lap sash seatbelt
 - How many child restraints you need to fit and;
 - What will be practical for you

The middle position in the rear seat is considered to be the safest position (providing it has a full lap sash seatbelt) as it is away from the sides of the car and reduces the risk of injury in the event of a side impact crash. The passenger side is considered to be the next best position as it allows you to place your child in and get them out of the car on the curb side of the road, away from the traffic.

PURCHASING A REARWARD FACING CHILD CAR RESTRAINT

For Newborns



INSTALLING YOUR RESTRAINT

Kidsafe recommends having your child car restraint fitted by a professional, at least for the first time, to ensure that it is correctly installed. The 'Safe Seats, Safe Kids' program provides free child car restraint fittings and checks at local venues across the state—to find out more or to book an appointment, please visit safeseatssafekids.com.au.



If you plan to install the restraint yourself, ensure you follow the manufacturer's instructions closely—these will be included with your child restraint.

USING YOUR RESTRAINT

While the law allows children over 6 months to use either a rear facing restraint or a forward facing restraint, it is important that you keep your child rear facing for as long as they fit the size limits of their restraint. The rear facing position provides children with better protection and allows them to develop the head and neck strength they need when they move into the forward facing position.

For more information and tips on using child restraints, please visit

kidsafevic.com.au/road-safety/child-restraints



CONGRATULATIONS—YOU ARE EXPECTING A BABY!

You will have lots of decisions to make and one of the most important will be selecting and installing a child car restraint so that you are ready to take your baby (or babies!) home safely when they are born.



TYPES OF RESTRAINTS

Appropriate for Newborns

THERE ARE THREE MAIN TYPES OF REAR-FACING CHILD RESTRAINTS THAT ARE SUITABLE FOR USE BY A NEWBORN CHILD—

CAPSULES, CONVERTIBLE AND EXTENDED REAR FACING RESTRAINTS.



Rearward facing restraints

Commonly referred to as baby capsules or carriers, these restraints are suitable for infants from birth up until between 9–12 months (depending on the model). They contain an inbuilt harness and as the name suggests, can only be used in a rear-facing position in a vehicle.



Convertible restraint

A convertible restraint is a combination of a rearward and forward facing restraint. Once your child outgrows the rearward facing position the restraint can be turned around and used as a forward facing restraint. Some types of convertible restraints cater for children from birth until 8 years meaning they convert from rear facing, to forward facing and then to a booster seat.



Extended rear facing restraints

These restraints are suitable to use in the rearward facing position from birth up until approximately 2–3 years. Depending on the model, once a child has outgrown the rear facing position, these restraints can be turned around and used as a forward facing restraint until 4 or 8 years of age.

Pros: Capsules can be convenient because they are mobile, which allows you to leave your baby in the capsule while you take them in and out of the vehicle. Some capsules also attach to a pram and allow easy transition from travelling in a car to walking.

Cons: Capsules can only be used while your baby fits in the rearward facing position—when they outgrow this position you will have to purchase a new restraint. For this reason, some people choose to hire a capsule for 9–12 months rather than purchasing one.

Pros: You are able to use a convertible restraint for a longer period of time (from birth until 4 or 8 years depending on the model) compared to a capsule.

Cons: Convertible restraints can be heavier and not as convenient when taking your newborn in and out of the car as they cannot be attached to a pram.

Pros: You are able to leave your child in the rearward facing position for a longer period of time than other options (2–3 years compared to 9–12 months). You can also use extended rear facing restraints for a longer period of time (from birth until 4–8 years depending on the model) compared to a capsule.

Cons: Extended rear facing restraints can take up more room in your car (sometimes not leaving much room for the front passenger) and are not as convenient when taking your newborn in and out of the car as they cannot be attached to a pram.