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## Car Seats

Children need different restraints as they grow. The restraint must be the right size for the child, properly adjusted and fastened, and correctly fitted to the vehicle.

### **Restraint road rules**

All persons travelling in a motor vehicle must travel in a restraint that is properly adjusted and fastened. The restraint will be a child restraint, booster seat or adult seatbelt. The type of restraint will depend on the child's size. The road rules in Victoria require:

- A child under six months of age to travel in a rearward facing approved child restraint.
- A child aged six months to under 4 years to travel in either a rearward facing OR forward facing approved child restraint. The type of restraint will depend on the child's size.
- A child aged 4 years to under 7 years to travel in either a forward facing approved child restraint with an inbuilt harness, or an approved booster seat\*. The type of restraint will depend on the child's size.
- A child aged 7 years to under 16 years to travel in either an approved booster seat or an adult seatbelt. The type of restraint will depend on the child's size.
- A person 16 years and over to travel in an adult seatbelt.

*\*A booster seat can be used with a lap-sash seatbelt or child safety harness.*

### **Approved child restraints, booster seats and child safety harnesses**

In Victoria, approved child restraints, approved booster seats and approved child safety harnesses are restraints that comply with the 1995, 2000, 2004 or 2010 versions of the Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 1754. This standard (AS/NZS 1754) is one of the most stringent child restraint standards in the world. When buying your child's restraint, look for the standard's sticker on the restraint and wording on the package that states it complies with AS/NZS 1754. In addition integrated (or integral) booster seats are considered an approved booster seat and are

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legal for use by children 4 years and over when travelling in a motor vehicle in Victoria. An integrated booster seat is one that is built into the seat of the car when it is manufactured. The seat can be adjusted to allow an adult or a child 4 years and over to travel in that seat.

### **Latest version of AS/NZS 1754**

The AS/NZS 1754 standard has been updated over time as laws and the technology of child restraints change. The latest version of the standard was released in 2010 and some restraints that meet this standard are now available for consumers to purchase.

The new features include:

- booster seats that are suitable for children from approximately 4 years to approximately 6 to 8 years of age (available now)
- an approximate age and shoulder height marking to guide selection of restraint (no longer weight based)
- colour coded seatbelt paths to make installing in a motor vehicle easier
- the introduction of a new type of booster seat for children from approximately 4 years to approximately 8 to 10 years of age (available in the future).

### **Choosing the safest restraint for your child**

The Child Restraint Evaluation Program (CREP) gives consumers independent information on the levels of occupant protection from injury in a crash provided by child restraints and the ease with which they can be used correctly. CREP is supported by VicRoads, the RACV and the TAC in Victoria. For further information please visit <http://www.crep.com.au>

### **Fitting a child restraint or booster seat in your vehicle**

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when fitting the child restraint or booster seat to your vehicle. Using a restraint which has been incorrectly fitted, or is not suitable for your child's size, puts your child at a higher risk of serious injury or death in a crash. Some restraints do not fit well in smaller vehicles, or vehicles with seats that have contouring.

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Where possible, try the restraint in your vehicle before you purchase the restraint. If you need help fitting your restraint please see your local RACV office or visit their website at [www.racv.com.au](http://www.racv.com.au).

### What about size?

To protect your child in a crash the restraint must be the right size for your child. To ensure that all children are able to travel in the right size restraint, the road rules allow a child, who is too heavy or tall for the restraint recommended for their age, to use a restraint in the next age category.

Remember to protect your child in a crash:

- the restraint must be the right size for the child
- the restraint must be properly adjusted and fastened, and
- the restraint must be correctly fitted to the vehicle.

Changes to child restraints and booster seats The latest version (2010) of the child restraint standard has introduced the ability to select a restraint based on approximate ages and shoulder height markers on the restraint. Child restraints that comply with the 2010 version of the child restraint standard have no weight limits.

Child restraints and booster seats with shoulder height markers:

Rearward facing child restraint (inbuilt harness)	Two types: 1. Suitable for children to approximately 6 months
Forward facing child restraint (inbuilt harness)	Suitable for children approximately 6 months to approximately 4 years
Booster seat (additional child safety harness* optional)	Two types: 1. Suitable for children approximately 4 years to approximately 6 to 8 years (available now)  2. Suitable for children approximately 4 years to approximately 8 to 10 years (available in the future)

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\* A Booster seat is not recommended for use with a lap-sash seatbelt.

Child restraints and booster seats with weight limits:  
Restraint products complying with the 1991, 1995, 2000, or 2004 versions  
of the child restraint standard have weight limits for use.

Rearward facing child restraint (inbuilt harness)	Products are available for children up to 9 kg or 12 kg
Forward facing child restraint (inbuilt harness)	Suitable for children up to a maximum weight of 18 kg
Booster seat (additional child safety harness options)	Suitable for children up to a maximum weight of 26 kg