

CHILD CAR SEATS SAVE LIVES!



To ensure you are fitting your child seat correctly always buy it from a retailer who will demonstrate how it fits and if its compatible with your car. Don't be tempted to do this as an impulse purchase, as you may not get what's right for your child or lifestyle. Be prepared to spend some time with the retailer going through all requirements you need.

It's tempting to save money by using a second-hand child seat but bear in mind that it may not come with fitting instructions and you may not know how long it's been used for, how it's been cleaned, looked after, stored or worse if it's been in a collision. Your child is precious cargo so don't take the chance.

Results from 30 Child car seat checking events held around the UK in 2016 and 2017, in which 3000 seats were inspected by a specialist organisation called Child Seat Safety, revealed that **33%** of children were sitting in a chair that wasn't suitable for them, while another **36%** of seats were incorrectly fitted and, most worryingly, **3%** of children who legally needed to be in a child seat were completely unrestrained.

Don't just fit the seat correctly, Fit your child correctly too!

Keep checking on a regular basis that the harnesses, head support etc are all still in the correct position for your little one. The retailer will happily check it as well if you're unsure.

SNUG IS GOOD! Don't rush to move your child up to the next stage seat, check out the maximum weight/ height for their current seat and continue using it.

All harnesses are adjustable so make sure it is coming out of the seat at the correct position for your child and adjust it as they grow. In a rear facing seat it should be on the shoulder or just below it, but forward facing should be on the shoulder or just above it

The harness should always be pulled nice and tight to stop them being able to wriggle their arms out and undo the buckle, the best way to check if you've pulled it tight enough is to do the **PINCH TEST**, this means you shouldn't be able to pinch the harness together.

Indoor clothes in the car - The harness needs to be as close to the skin as possible to give the maximum protection, so no thick jumpers or winter coats.

WHAT DOES MY CHILD NEED?

If your child is under 18kgs they need to still be using a full harness or safety shield, this is because their bones aren't fully developed, and an adult seat belt won't hold them securely in their seat just yet.



If they are over 18kgs but under 135cm tall, they should always use a high-backed booster seat for all journeys. These seats are designed to provide protection to their head, neck, spine and hips. So, it's like providing them with amour. **Don't be tempted to use a booster cushion, they don't offer as much protection as your child will need in a crash.**

Why should my child sit rear-facing?

It's vital to protect young children's heads, necks and spines in a collision, so keep them rear facing for as long as possible. Always keep your child rear facing for at least the first 12 months (or 15 months in an i-Size seat) After that you have an option to use an Extended Rear Facing (ERF) seat, which will keep your child rear-facing for longer. In frontal impacts this is the best way to reduce the risk of neck and spinal injuries. Many of these seats take children to 25kg which is around 7 years of age.

Children are not small adults, that's why we have different seats for different stages in their lives.

What does the law say?

The UK road traffic law says that a child must use an appropriate child seat until they are 135cm in height or 12-years of age: whichever they reach first.

It's the driver's responsibility to ensure all passengers 14 years and under are using the correct child seat or seatbelt, and it would be the driver that prosecuted if they are breaking the law, regardless as to who's children they are.

EVEN ON THE SHORTEST JOURNEYS, ALWAYS MAKE SURE THAT EVERY CHILD IN YOUR CAR HAS THE APPROPRIATE SEAT FOR THEIR WEIGHT, HEIGHT AND AGE.

Legal exemptions don't prevent children from being seriously injured or killed.