

THE GOOD EGG GUIDE TO IN-CAR

ChildSafety

- **Child-restraint systems**
- **Safe seats**
- **Options available**
- **The law**

Road Safety GB
The voice of road safety

www.roadsafetygb.org.uk

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Child safety is an issue that cannot be taken for granted, and keeping children safe inside the car should be a priority for any driver who has responsibility for a child passenger. As a Road Safety Officer for over 20 years - and a father and grandfather - I am also aware of the vulnerability of children. Young children cannot be expected to take responsibility for their own safety, so it is up to us as adults to act for them.

The Good Egg Guide is an excellent tool for parents and carers, designed to ensure that all children are restrained correctly when travelling in a vehicle. It offers good sound practical advice about buying, choosing and fitting the right car seat.

Road Safety GB's aim is very simple. We want to reduce the number of child casualties caused in road traffic collisions and you, as a responsible adult, can do most to help us achieve just that.

Let's keep them safe!



Alan Kennedy
Chairman
Road Safety GB

Road Safety GB
The voice of road safety

www.roadsgb.org.uk

Welcome

Did you know that at child car seat checks across the UK, as many as eight out of ten child car seats were not fitted correctly and many children were not restrained at all?

And yet, if correctly restrained when travelling by car, a child is ninety percent less likely to be killed in a collision.¹

This guide aims to highlight the importance of correctly fitted child restraints and give guidance on how to find the best seat for your child's height, weight and size.

It also outlines your responsibilities and how to keep on the right side of the law.



We hope you find it useful and that it helps you to keep your child / children safe.

¹ Source: Department for Transport 2004 (Advice on seat belts)



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why should you restrain your child?

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Section 1

Did you know:



An unrestrained child can be killed in an impact at speeds as low as 5mph¹



If properly restrained, a child is three times less likely to sustain a head injury in a collision than an unrestrained child²



In a collision at 30mph, an unrestrained child would hit the front seat – and anyone in it – with a force of between 30 to 60 times their own body weight³

1 Source: Department for Transport 2004 (Advice on seat belts)

2 Source: Transport Research Laboratory April 1996

3 Source: Think! Advice – seat belts & child restraints 2010

Why is this called the Good Egg Guide to in-car child safety?

We call this the 'Good Egg' guide because children are fragile, and no matter how much we love them, we can sometimes let them down.

By not understanding the importance of them being properly restrained in a correctly fitted child car seat or seat belt, we could be responsible for the last thing we would ever want for them – serious injury or even death.

This guide is here to help you, outlining several key steps towards protecting your child:



Step 1 Find out how to help prevent your child being killed or injured

Step 2 Be confident when you buy a child car seat and know the right questions to ask

Step 3 Understand the law

We will also show you where you can find further free advice and help.

Please do it for the sake of your child.



Child seats should fit the child AND the car – use the correct seat for the right vehicle.

The facts tell their story

Of course, it couldn't happen to you!

Most people think they are 'above average' drivers, however collisions can and do happen no matter how good a driver you are.

- In 2008, more than 7,000 children under fourteen were injured as car passengers on British roads ⁴
- It takes less than a fifth of a second for an unrestrained child to be catapulted through a car window in a collision at only 30mph ⁵

Many cars in which a child has been killed or injured were not travelling fast. The majority of collisions occur at speeds lower than 30mph on everyday trips to the shops or school. Yet it is on these short trips that children are most likely to be unrestrained.

A child thrown forward during a crash could hit front seat passengers with the force of a baby elephant and could seriously injure or kill other people in the car as well as themselves.

Please always ensure that your child is properly restrained, even if you are just nipping out in the car for a few minutes.

After any collision, all child car seats should be destroyed and replaced. The seat belt should also be replaced.

Top
Tip



⁴ Source: Department for Transport, Reported casualties: 2008

⁵ Source: www.wigan.gov.uk/services/getting_about/road_safety/child_car_seats

It could be, quite simply, a matter of life or death.

CASE STUDIES



1 | It's a miracle she's still alive

"It was only a short trip" said mum Pauline Thomson, "but it almost had fatal consequences for us.

We were taking my mum home and she was in the back of the car with six-month old baby Leona on her knee. Since it was only a two-minute journey, we thought it would be alright.

As our car stopped to turn right, another car hit us, and Leona went straight through the glass in the rear side window and landed on the pavement.

A passer-by picked her up - he thought she was a doll - and left her on the bonnet of our car.

Lucky isn't the word for it - it was a miracle she survived.

Our son was in the car too and, if he hadn't been wearing his seat belt, he would have gone through the windscreen.

It doesn't matter how much a car seat costs, you can't replace a child - there's no price for that, and a properly fitted car seat could save your child's life."





2 | Lucky escape

A car was sitting at the foot of a steep hill when a JCB travelling down the hill had brake failure. The JCB ploughed into and under the car, throwing it almost vertical.

Inside the car, both a mother and her two-year-old child were shocked and distressed but, thankfully, unhurt.

The child's car seat had held in place throughout the whole ordeal. If the seat had *not* been secure, this would have resulted in serious injury or death.



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3 | Flying hazard

A baby was rushed into an A&E department with head injuries. The car she had been travelling in had been involved in a collision. Although she was correctly restrained in her child seat, her buggy - stored in the boot without a parcel shelf - had come flying forward and landed on her. She ended up with a fractured skull.

**Top
Tip**

Remember, even if your child is restrained properly, there can be a serious threat from any unsecured items such as shopping, hand bags etc. These could injure someone in a collision or if you have to brake suddenly.



Section 2



Isofix is a method of fitting the child seat directly into your car without using a seat belt. It reduces the risk of incorrect fitting.

Ask your retailer or refer to your car manual.

SINGLE GROUP SEATS

GROUP 0	Birth - 10Kg	Birth - 6months
GROUP 0+	Birth - 13Kg	Birth - 12months
GROUP 1	9 - 18Kg	9 Months - 4 Years
GROUP 2-3	15 - 36Kg	4 Years - 12 Years

COMBINATION SEATS

GROUP 0+ Et 1	Birth - 18KG	Birth - 4 Years
GROUP 1-2-3	9 - 36KG	9 Months - 12 Years



Before you buy

- Always look for the United Nations ECE R44.04 mark
- Try the child car seat in your car before buying, because not every seat fits every car
- Never fit a child restraint in a seat protected by a front airbag

What do they need when?

Children are all different and some grow and develop quicker than others, so restraints come in a variety of styles and sizes.

The key factors for getting it right are the child's weight, height and age.

Child car seats are sold by group categories (from Group 0 to 3) which relate to the weight bands suitable for your child. Ages shown are for guidance only.

The following pages show some examples of suitable child restraints available...

What's it like?

Infant carrier

- A rear facing infant carrier which can be fitted in the front or rear of a car with a lap-and-diagonal seat belt or Isofix*
- Some child seats may be fitted with a base. If this base has a supporting leg, please do not use if there is a storage compartment in the footwell or any obstructions, unless it's approved for use on storage boxes

Combination

- A combination seat which can:
be converted to face forward once your child reaches 9 kg in weight and then can be used up to 18 kg (approx. four years old)

The baby seat

Group 0+

Infant carrier - Who it's for

Weight: up to approx. 13 kg

Approx. age: birth to 9-12 mths



Group 0+/1

Combination seat - Who it's for

Weight: up to approx. 18 kg

Approx. age: birth to 4 years



Infants in rear facing seats should never ride in a front seat where a passenger airbag is installed. If the airbag is activated for any reason it will inflate instantly and explosively, which could seriously injure your child.

Top Tip

* Isofix seats must be approved by the seat manufacturer for use in your car (check compatibility approval list). Please note: seats shown are for illustration purposes only.

The child seat



The child is usually restrained by the seat's integral five point harness, however other methods of restraint may be used.

Group 1

Who it's for

Weight
9-18 kg

Approx. age:
9 months to 4 years

What's it like?

A forward facing seat:

- which can be used in the front or rear of the car
- which may have a choice of upright or reclined positions

Designed to be secured:

- by an adult seat belt, or
- by its own retention system (Isofix*)

Top Tip

Remember, if you take the car seat out for cleaning, make sure it is re-installed correctly.

Top Tip

Use hot soapy water to clean the webbings of the seat – corrosive products can reduce its effectiveness in a collision.






DO NOT use on a seat fitted with a front airbag even if it is deactivated or switched off.

* Isofix seats must be approved by the seat manufacturer for use in your car (check compatibility approval list).

Please note: seat shown is for illustration purposes only.

What's it like?

A forward facing booster seat that:

-  can be used in the front or rear of the car
-  lifts your child so that an adult seat belt can be used and positioned correctly
-  provides head, neck and side impact protection
-  has slots to guide the adult seat belt
-  should only be used with a lap-and-diagonal belt even if secured by Isofix*

The booster seat

Group 2 & 3

Who it's for

Weight
15 kg and upwards

Approx. age:
4 years and upwards

DO NOT use on a seat fitted with a front airbag even if it is deactivated or switched off.



This type of booster seat will help prevent a sleeping child from sliding out of the seat belt.

Top Tip

* Isofix seats must be approved by the seat manufacturer for use in your car (check compatibility approval list).
Please note: seat shown is for illustration purposes only.



The booster cushion



Although this type of seat is legal, a booster seat (see page 15) is a much safer option.

What's it like?

A forward facing booster cushion that:

- can be used in the front or rear of the car using the lap-and-diagonal belt only
- lifts your child so that the adult seat belt is positioned correctly across their shoulder and chest while providing protection to the pelvis. Never tuck the belt under their arm or behind their back
- absorbs any impact on your child's under-developed hips with horns designed to protect them. The lap belt section needs to be positioned across their lap and passed under the horns

DO NOT use on a seat fitted with a front airbag even if it is deactivated or switched off.

Group 2 & 3

Who it's for

Height
Up to 135cm (4ft 5ins)

Approx. age:
6 years and upwards

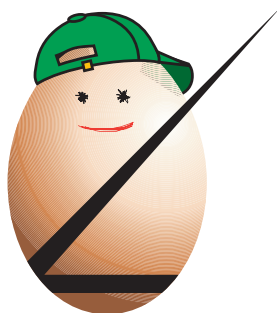
Please note: seat shown is for illustration purposes only.

What's it like?

This is a lap-and-diagonal belt (or lap belt only)

- do not be tempted to let your child use the adult belt too early. They are better protected with an appropriate restraint
- if using a lap-only belt, it should be adjusted manually for a snug fit over the hips, not leaving any slack
- if fitted with height adjusters, the diagonal strap must be made to lie centrally over the shoulder and away from the neck

The adult seat belt



Who it's for

Height
135cm (4ft 5ins) upwards

Age
12 years and over

Don't carry more passengers than you have seat belts for and make sure everyone wears them correctly.

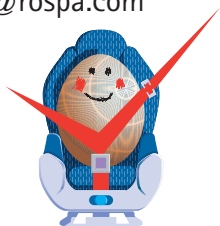
Top
Tip

The Good Egg Guide to buying a seat

When you need to buy a new child car seat, it's worth taking your time to find a good adviser.

Check out our website www.protectchildgb.org.uk or look at consumer test sites such as www.which.co.uk

You can also contact your local road safety team at www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/contacts/ or help@rospa.com



Never leave a child unattended in a car.

Buying a seat - get the right answers to these questions:

Is this the right seat for my child?

The adviser should check that the seat is suitable for your child's height, weight, age and physical development.

Will it fit my car?

The adviser should check the seat manufacturer's information. Ideally try before you buy or ensure it can be returned if it doesn't fit correctly.

Is the seat of the correct standard?

The adviser should point out the official standard mark (ECE R44.04).

Are fitting instructions easily understood?

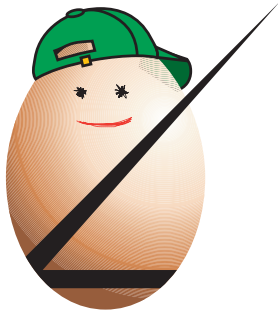
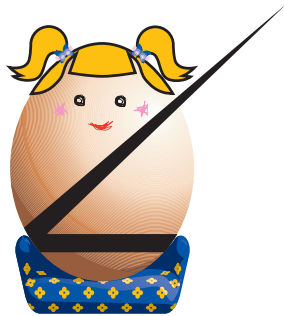
The adviser should go over them with you.

Is it a problem if my car has a passenger-seat airbag?

The adviser will explain why a car seat should **never** be fitted where there is a front passenger airbag.

Which make should I buy?

Try not to compromise. If the adviser recommends the most appropriate restraint, even though it's more expensive, ignore any bargain-hunting instincts!



It is illegal to use any seat which is ECE R44.02 or earlier.



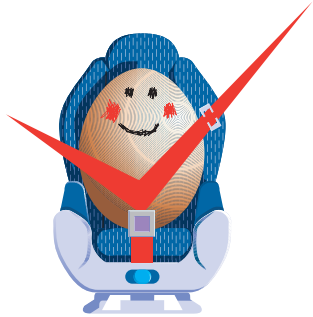
Don't risk it

Don't use old or second hand seats or be tempted by a kind offer from a close family member or friend because:

- the seat may already have serious damage that you can't see
- important safety components may be missing or damaged
- the buckle and lock may not prove effective in a crash
- the seat may not fit properly in your car
- you are unlikely to get a seat made to the latest safety standard, ECE R44.04, with all the latest improvements
- the manufacturer's fitting instructions may no longer be available



Fit right, sit tight



Once you have bought the correct seat for your child and ensured that it will also fit your car – make sure it is fitted properly.

Even with the best seat, incorrect fitting could still prove fatal.

Ask your adviser to fit it for you and then to watch as you fit it yourself.

Remember:

- before you buy a seat make sure the adviser will allow you to return it if it doesn't fit in your car/s
- make sure if you have more than one vehicle, that it will fit both or all of them
- buy new – don't buy an old or second hand seat
- follow the manufacturer's instructions exactly

Fitting – Eight steps for safety

1. Fit your child seat properly, preferably with professional help.
2. Make sure it sits tightly in the adult seat.
3. Keep the fitting instructions in the car – you may need them again.
4. Never fit a child restraint in a seat with a front airbag.
5. Make sure the adult seat belt passes through all the correct guides.
6. Never modify the seat or adult seat belt to make it fit.
7. Don't let the seat belt buckle be bent over or rest on the child seat frame.
8. Recheck your seat before each journey.



Frequently asked questions



Q My child has special needs – who could help me with choosing the right seat?

A Some children have special requirements which may or may not require specially adapted seats. Occasionally it is possible to adjust an existing seat by making a minor alteration such as adding an additional harness or protective padding. Help and advice should be available through your child's key worker and car seat adviser.

Q What should I do if my child keeps releasing their seat belt?

A We recommend that you stop the car as soon as it is safe to do so and tell them you won't go any further until it's secured. Or try distracting them with a game or fit a play tray to their seat. Some seats have these as optional extras and will hide the buckle from their view yet still allow it to be quickly released in case of an emergency.

Q If I only have three available seat belts and need to carry four people, am I able to do this?

A No. You can only transport the number of people for whom there are seat belts available – in this case three

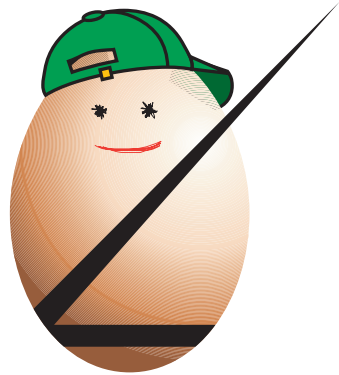
Q Can I use an Isofix seat in a car that doesn't have Isofix fittings?

A Yes, but only when using an Isofix seat which has been approved for use with an adult seat belt. Not all Isofix seats may be used with seat belts.

Q What is the safest way for my child to travel in the car?

A It is always best to keep your child rearward facing as long as possible. Don't be tempted to turn them around too soon.





Section 3

What the law says

The law can seem complicated, so the best way to stay on the right side of it is to use the most appropriate restraint for **everyone** travelling in the car.



Penalties

If you don't obey the law you will:

- be liable to prosecution if any child under 14 is in your car and not wearing a correct child restraint or seat belt. If over 14, they will be liable themselves
- be served a monetary fixed penalty or possibly penalty points if a child is found to be unrestrained
- have your compensation restricted. Any money awarded after a collision may be reduced if anyone in the car was not properly restrained

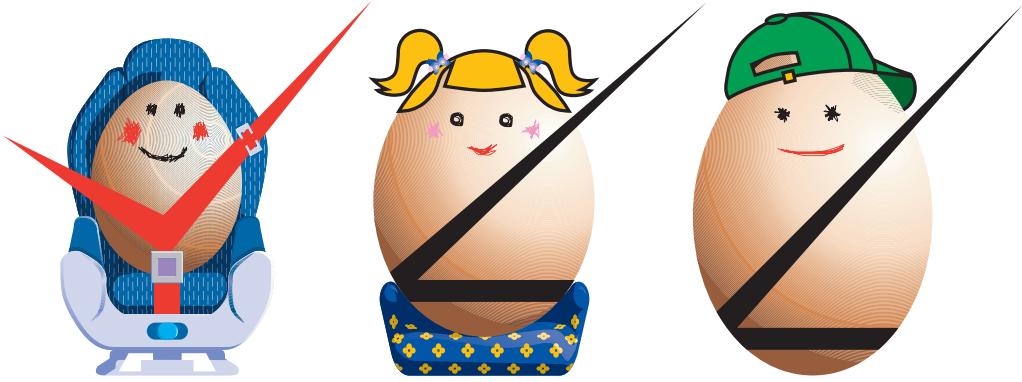
In addition to seat belt legislation, the law also provides for those who are deemed to be carrying passengers in a dangerous manner. This is a much more serious offence and carries a fine of up to £2,500 and three penalty points.

The law in brief

A guide to your responsibility as a driver

Who's involved?	Sitting in the front seat	Sitting in the rear seat	Whose responsibility?
Driver	Seat belt MUST be worn if fitted		Driver
Child under 3 years of age	Correct child restraint MUST be used	Correct child restraint must be used. If one is not available in a taxi, may travel unrestrained	Driver
Child from 3rd birthday up to 135cms in height (4' 5") or 12th birthday, whichever they reach first	Correct child restraint MUST be used	Correct child restraint must be used where seat belt is fitted. Must use adult seat belt if correct child restraint is not available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In a licensed taxi/private hire vehicle the child may travel unrestrained - for a short distance in an unexpected necessity - if two occupied child restraints prevent fitting a third 	Driver
Child aged 12 or 13, or over 135cms in height	Seat belt MUST be worn if fitted	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Driver
Passengers aged 14 years old and over	Seat belt MUST be worn if fitted	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Passenger





Section 4

A growing issue

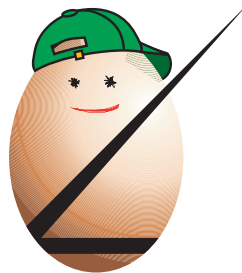
Top Tip

In the front passenger seat never let an older child sit with their feet up on the dashboard – if there is a collision, the airbag will be activated and could seriously injure their legs or feet.

As they get older, children should know that it's their responsibility always to wear a seat belt.

Young people tend to wear belts as front seat passengers but find excuses for not wearing them in the back, even though it is a legal requirement.

Your older children must understand that collisions can and do happen, and that the simple act of putting on a seat belt could prevent them from killing themselves or someone else.



As your child grows:

- Up to 135cm (4ft 5ins) or 12 years old – you must use the correct child restraint
- Once your child no longer needs a child restraint, ensure the car's head rest is no lower than the child's eye/ear level
- If possible, use lap-and-diagonal belts rather than lap only belts

Find out more

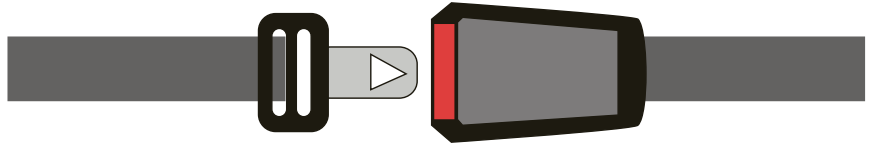
For more information about child seats and safety in cars visit our website at:



www.protectchildgb.org.uk



In the front, sit as far back as possible to reduce the likelihood of serious head or chest injuries in a collision.



We would like to thank all our partners for their assistance with this guide.

Particular thanks to Road Safety GB, Road Safety Scotland, RoSPA, the In-Car Safety Centre and the Wigan Road Safety Team. Also to Britax and Maxi-Cosi for their car seat illustrations.

We would also like to thank our sponsors, the Arnold Clark Group and the Highways Agency for their valuable support.

While every endeavour has been made to ensure the information contained within this guide is accurate, Dynamic Initiatives accepts no responsibility for any omissions or errors.

For more information visit www.protectchildgb.org.uk or the Road Safety GB website: www.roadsafetygb.org.uk

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The Highways Agency is delighted to support the Good Egg Guide to In-Car Child Safety



THE GOOD EGG GUIDE TO IN-CAR

ChildSafety



HIGHWAYS AGENCY

The Highways Agency is an agency of the Department for Transport and is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and all-purpose trunk roads - collectively known as the strategic road network.

In 2008 we reported over 12,500 accidents involving 19,527 casualties on our roads. Whilst we are proud to have some of the safest roads in the world this still meant 340 fatalities and 1,713 people seriously injured on our roads. Of these 13 fatalities and 51 serious injuries were children in-vehicles. Children are particularly vulnerable whilst travelling especially when not strapped in properly, that is why we are pleased to be supporting The Good Egg Guide, to reduce the risks to us all especially young children.

The Good Egg Guide will form part of a series of educational resources that have been created to raise awareness of safety issues. As a parent or guardian you may find further information at www.highways.gov.uk/DIP.

For further information on live traffic information go to www.highways.gov.uk/traffic

The Arnold Clark Group is delighted to support



THE SCOTTISH GOOD EGG GUIDE TO IN-CAR

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Founded in 1954, Arnold Clark, AM's Retailer of the Year 2009, is Europe's largest independently owned motor dealer group, which offers genuine value for money and high levels of customer service across over 145 branches nationwide. Retailing over 250,000 new and used cars a year their award winning website shows the fantastic range of services on offer.

- New, Nearly New and Used Car Sales
- Servicing & Repairs • Car & Van Rental
- Finance • Insurance • Contract Hire • Fleet Sales

Sir Arnold Clark, Chairman and Chief Executive is passionate about cars and as a father, great grandfather and an employer of over 8,000, he feels road safety, especially In-Car Child Safety, is an extremely important message that needs to be shared.



Sir Arnold Clark

The Good Egg Guide highlights how to improve on children's safety in cars and helps reduce the number of child casualties caused in road traffic accidents.

For more information on the Arnold Clark Group visit

Arnold Clark .com

Checklist

Do as much research as you can before buying a seat...

- ✱ Check the weight (kg and lbs) and height (ft and m) of your child
- ✱ Find out which seats are/are not suitable for your child and car(s)
- ✱ Ensure that the chosen retailer has trained members of staff
- ✱ Ensure a trained member of staff will fit and check your seat
- ✱ Ask the adviser to guide you through the fitting process
- ✱ Only buy a seat which carries the ECE R44.04 mark
- ✱ Choose a seat which has simple and clear fitting instructions
- ✱ NEVER buy a second hand seat
- ✱ Always follow the manufacturer's instructions completely



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