

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT CAR SEAT



## Second-hand can cost lives



### WARNING:

The British Standards Institution and the Baby Products Association advise that car seats should not be bought or sold second-hand.

Many seats sold through local advertising, car boot sales and internet auction sites have been found to be dangerous. Please dispose of your car seat safely.

**bsi.**

There are currently two Regulations in place in the UK - ECE R44.04 and a new Regulation R129 i-Size. Whilst R44.04 deals with the weight of the child, R129 specifies the age and size of the child for which it is suitable. The groupings overleaf will help you to find the correct seat depending on which type of restraint you choose and as long as your child's car restraint complies with one, it meets the requirements of the law. We recommend that you seek advice from a reputable retailer when purchasing child restraints as they can advise a suitable product for your vehicle and its correct fitting.

### NEVER buy second-hand because:

- You are unlikely to get a seat made to the latest version of Regulation ECE R44.04 or R129 i-Size. The improvements are really worth paying for.
- The seat may not fit your car properly.
- You may not get a copy of the instructions for use. These are vital if you are to fit the seat correctly.
- Important safety components may be missing or damaged.
- The seat itself may already have been damaged or stressed in an accident. This may not be apparent by visual inspection.
- The buckle and its lock may not prove effective in the event of a car crash.
- The latest seats include additional protection around the head and torso which could prevent serious damage to the body and sensitive organs in an accident.

*'On-line purchases, second-hand seats and hand-me-downs have contributed to a sharp 43% growth in incorrect fitting since 2010'* Good Egg Child Car Seat Safety

**DON'T WAIT FOR AN ACCIDENT TO DISCOVER THAT YOUR CHILD'S CAR RESTRAINT IS UNSAFE!**

The following organisations support the advice given in this leaflet:  
Child Accident Prevention Trust  
In-Car Safety Centre, Milton Keynes  
Mothercare  
Mother & Baby Magazine  
Institute of Road Safety Officers  
Retail Motor Industry Federation  
Road Safety Department, London  
Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents  
The European Nursery Products Confederation.

[www.thebpa.eu](http://www.thebpa.eu)



# FACT FILE



The first phase of Regulation R129 i-Size (introduced in July 2013) affects Group 0, Group 0+ and some Group 1 child restraints. Under the first phase of this Regulation, child restraints must have an ISOFIX base and it is mandatory for children to be rear facing up to 15 months of age. From 15 months children can be rearward or forward facing up to a maximum height of 105cm.

## Regulation ECE R44.04 :



### group 0

Up to 10kg (22lbs) or birth to approximately 9 months. Used rearward facing in the car. Some are used as an infant carrier and low chair and some are part of a travel system.



### group 0+

Up to 13kg (29lbs) or birth to approximately 12-15 months. Similar to group 0 but are designed to allow you to carry your baby for longer facing rearward in the car.



### group 1

9-18kg (20-40lbs) or approximately 9 months to 4 years. Used forward-facing in the car. These generally have a choice of upright and recline positions. Some have a harness to secure the child and others use the car seat-belt.



### group 2

15-25kg (33-55lbs) or approximately 4-6 years. Used forward facing in the car. Some are two-part seats. Called high backed boosters the backrest can be removed to leave a booster seat as child grows. Such seats cover both groups 2 and 3.



### group 3

22-36kg (48-79lbs) or approximately 6-11 years. Used forward-facing in the car. these lift the child to position the lap and diagonal seat-belt correctly.

## THE LAW

- Children under 3 MUST use an R44.04 child restraint appropriate for their weight or an R129 child restraint appropriate to their age and size in any vehicle. The only exception is in the rear of a taxi if an appropriate child restraint is not available.
- Children under 3 years must be in a child car seat. Therefore, they cannot travel in a vehicle that does not have seat belts.
- Children aged 3 years and above must use an appropriate child restraint in both the front and rear of a vehicle, until they are EITHER 12 years old OR 135 cm tall. The only exceptions to this is if the journey is:
  1. In a licensed taxi or private hire vehicle
  2. A short, unexpected journey
  3. Two occupied child restraints in the rear prevent a third being fitted
  4. The vehicle is not fitted with seat belts
- It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that children under the age of 14 years are restrained correctly in accordance with the law.

## AIRBAGS

- Infants in REAR facing child safety seats MUST NOT ride in a front seat where there is a passenger air-bag installed and active.
- It's safer to fit child seats in the rear of the car, but if necessary they can be fitted in the front. Make sure the car seat is as far back as it will go, so the child is as far as possible from the dashboard reducing the possibility of head or chest injuries in a crash.

## CARRYCOTS

There is no longer an exemption for children less than one year in a carrycot in a car. The appropriate Group 0 or Group 0+ child restraint MUST be used from birth.

## ISOFIX

Isofix provides a more secure and easier way of attaching child seats in cars. Fitting points are built into both cars and child car seats when they are manufactured. An Isofix child seat is 'plugged' into the corresponding fitting points in the car, removing the need to use the car's seat belts to secure it. An additional top tether or support leg is used to prevent the child seat tilting or rotating in an impact.

Not all ISOFIX child seats fit all makes of car. It is important to check for fitting suitability of all cars you intend fitting the seat in (including family and friends). When buying a new Isofix child seat, take your car to the retailer, if possible, and ask to try the seat out in the car before you buy it.

## FITTING

A shocking report by Good Egg Child Car Safety (2015) said that in 2014, 71% of child car restraints in England and Wales were unsafe as they were incorrectly fitted or unsuitable for a vehicle and consequently child deaths or serious injury in accidents rose by 20% since 2010. To ensure your child is protected, the car seat MUST be correctly fitted into your car. Not all car seats fit all cars.

- We recommend that where possible you purchase child restraints from a reputable retailer, who can recommend a suitable product for your vehicle and advise its correct fitting. If a child restraint is to be used in several vehicles, ensure that it is suitable for all.
- Always read the fitting instructions and keep them in a safe place for future reference - particularly important if you have a two-way seat.
- Most leading manufacturers have a helpline. You will generally find details of this on their website.
- If using the seat belt to anchor the product in place, pull the child seat down into the seat cushion until you have a very tight fit. A properly installed restraint should be firm with no excessive forward or sideways movement. The buckle of the seat belt should not rest on the frame.
- When the child is in the seat, adjust the harness so that just two fingers can be inserted under the shoulder straps on the baby's collar bone.

*A child's life is precious - don't compromise safety with second-hand car restraints!*