

# child seats and in-car vehicle safety



inside we cover...

The law

Child seat **safety tips**

**Head restraints** and how to minimise the risks

The facts



# Wearing a seatbelt Saves Lives

## - so belt up!

### The Law

- You must wear a seatbelt in cars and goods vehicles, where one is fitted.
- The Driver is liable to prosecution if a child under 14 does not wear a seat belt or a child head restraint.
- Children up to 135cms in height must use the appropriate child restraint when travelling in any car, van or goods vehicle.
- A child may use an adult belt when they reach 135cm or the age of 12.
- In buses or coaches with belts fitted, passengers' aged 14+ must use them.

### Child Seat Safety Tips

- Look for a label with an 'E' mark and an approval number starting with '03'. Only very old restraints will have a BS 'Kitemark'. These cannot be used after May 2008.
- Before buying a child restraint, try it in your car to check it fits properly. Ask for a demonstration.
- Beware of old or second hand restraints, which may be damaged or worn out.
- Take time to check that the seat you are buying is the right one for your child and that you follow the fitting instructions properly.

### Here is a quick guideline of the law concerning in car seating and safety

	Front Seat	Rear Seat	Who is responsible
Driver	Seat belt must be worn if fitted		
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 (approx 4'5") (12th birthday, whichever they reach first)	Correct child restraint must be used	Correct child restraint must be used where seat belts fitted. Must use adult belt in rear seat if correct child restraint not available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a taxi; or</li> <li>• For a short distance in an unexpected necessity; or</li> <li>• If two occupied child restraints prevent fitting of a third</li> </ul>	Driver
Child 12 or 13 or over 135cms (approx 4ft 5ins) in height	Adult seat belt must be worn if available	Adult seat belt must be worn if available	Driver
Adult Passengers	Seat belt must be worn if available	Seat belt must be worn if available	Driver

A close-up photograph of a car seat's headrest and seatbelt buckle. The headrest is dark grey with a fine, woven texture. The seatbelt buckle is black plastic with a prominent red rectangular button in the center. The word "PRESS" is embossed in white on the red button. The background is dark and out of focus.

## Did you know?

Seat belt wearing saves over **2,000** lives every year

**65%** of drivers and passengers did not know that the top of their head restraint should be level with the top of their head

'Whiplash' is responsible for causing injuries to over **200,000** people a year

# Head Restraints

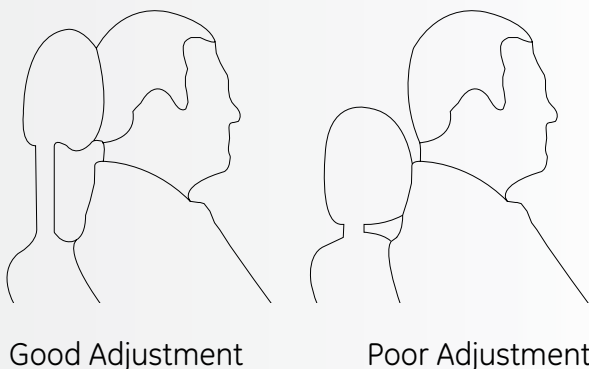
## Minimise the Risk!

- **Make sure that the top of your head restraint is level with the top of your head.** This provides maximum support in the instance of a crash.
- **Always ensure that your head restraint is as close to your head as possible,** ideally touching as this minimise the risk of whiplash.
- **Whiplash is the cause of 200,000 injuries per year** to drivers and of those injured 2,000 will suffer a permanent disability, including ongoing neck and back problems.
- In very serious cases, the neck can fracture or break causing death.

## What is Whiplash?

- **Whiplash is mainly caused through rear-impact crashes,** when the vehicle occupant is thrown forward.
- If the occupant's head is not positioned properly by the head restraint, their head will not accelerate as quickly as the torso. **This will cause the head to be flung backwards and the neck to bend.**
- **If the head restraint is positioned too low, it is possible for the head to be forced right back** over the restraint, causing extreme cases of whiplash and often long term damage.

## Correct head restraint positioning



## The Facts

A survey conducted by Brake and Direct Line on over 2,000 respondents found that: -

- Almost **65%** of drivers and passengers did not know that the top of their head restraint should be level with their head.
- **59%** of drivers did not know that their head restraint should be 2 inches or less from the back of their head.
- **90%** of drivers admitted to not adjusting their head restraint every time they get into a car.
- **77%** of drivers admitted never making sure their passengers adjusted their head restraints correctly.