

ISOFIX compatible restraints

What is the ISOFIX all about?

ISOFIX (International Standards Organisation Fix) is a child restraint fitting system. ISOFIX compatible restraints provide an alternative method of securing your restraint to your vehicle.

Seats that are ISOFIX compatible have an additional pair of connectors – one on either side of the seat. Not all Australian restraints are fitted with ISOFIX, so check the labelling on the box. Only restraints designed for children up to four years old are considered for this type of attachment. ISOFIX compatible restraints can be installed using the seatbelt method if the vehicle is not fitted with ISOFIX anchorages. Remember to always use the top tether regardless of which system – ISOFIX or seatbelt – you choose for fitting the seat.

The lower attachment connectors are built into the child restraint at the time of manufacture – they can't be added to existing restraints.

These connectors may have a flexible or rigid design (most on the Australian market are flexible) and they attach to the vehicle's ISOFIX low anchorages.

Flexible connectors on infant restraint

Unity



Flexible ISOFIX connectors

Where will I find ISOFIX anchorages in my car?

ISOFIX anchorage points can be found at the back of the seat base in the rear of the vehicle. Sometimes they can be hidden under the upholstery. Check the vehicle manual for their location if you're unsure.

If your vehicle doesn't have ISOFIX anchorage points, you'll still be able to use an Australian ISOFIX compatible restraint by using the existing vehicle seatbelt through the seatbelt path at the back of the restraint.



Is it easier to install and is it safer?

While it's been suggested that the ISOFIX system may provide easier installation for parents, RAA is reminding parents to ensure that any restraint they use is installed correctly. They should refer to the manual or consult a professional child restraint fitter for guidance.

The ease of use with the ISOFIX system will still depend on the design of the child restraint, the design of the vehicle, and the ease of access to the ISOFIX anchorages in the vehicle.

There's little to suggest that ISOFIX restraints are safer than those fitted with a seatbelt. Most importantly, whichever installation system you choose to use, it must be fitted as per the manufacturer's instructions to perform as it's designed. This will ensure maximum protection for your child.

Legal requirements

Under Australian laws, only approved restraints can be used. An approved restraint is one that meets the AS/NZS 1754: Child restraint systems for use in motor vehicles Standard, which means **it's illegal to use an ISOFIX compatible child restraint from overseas.**

The Australian Standard for child restraints is one of the highest standards in the world.

Child restraints approved to this Standard are required to:

- have a top tether strap (on all infant restraints, safety seats and booster seats over 2kg in weight)
- have a rebound prevention feature to keep a rearward-facing child restraint in position (for example, a stabilising bar)
- be tested in a side impact with a door (high level of side impact protection in crashes)
- be tested in an inverted position to test for occupant ejection (rollover crashes).

We're here to help

For more information on child restraints, call the RAA Safety Centre on **8202 4592**, email childrestraints@raa.com.au or visit raa.com.au/childsafety