

Car seat information

The following information has been obtained from:

Philip Blake

Road Safety Officer

☎ Telephone 01534 612222

📠 Facsimile 01534 612756

🌐 Web site <http://www.crash.je>

✉ email p.blake@jersey.pnn.police.uk

📧 Post PO Box 789, Jersey, JE4 8ZD

Seatbelts are designed to keep you securely in your seat in the case of a car accident. With this in mind car manufacturers design cars to crumple around you and reduce the forces involved in a crash - that lessens your risk of an injury.

Adult seat belts are designed for people who are more than 1.5m in height

The below information has been taken from www.crash.je

Anyone less than this height tends to find the seat belt rubbing against the side of their neck and the lap part of the belt tends to lie across the stomach instead of the hips and pelvic area. The 'Think campaign' and RoSPA both now advise parents to ensure their children use a booster cushion for older children up to the age of 10 or 11 depending on their height. (This is now Law in the United Kingdom and the EU)

Because of the belt rubbing against the neck, children tend to place the diagonal part of the seat belt either behind their back or under the arm that would normally be under the belt, this has the effect on the diagonal part of the belt now being positioned over the stomach and rib area of the body. Occasionally the diagonal is left rubbing against the neck.

In a collision at 30mph it is estimated that an unrestrained occupant is thrown forward with a force equal to 30 to 60 times its own body weight.

The 'Think campaign' estimates the average body weight to be in the region of 3.5 tonnes. (Source Department of Transport dft)

Should a car occupant place the diagonal part of the seat belt around their back to improve comfort, then all the above forces in a crash will be placed around the stomach area, rather than hip and pelvic area (particularly in the case of undersized children) with the possibility of incurring serious internal injuries. If the diagonal part of the belt is placed under the arm then the above forces will be focused against the ribs and stomach, again with the possibility of causing serious injuries. When left rubbing against the neck, throat and neck injuries may then occur.

Remember seatbelts are the best life saving design in the car

They keep you secure in one place.

If you do not wear a seatbelt in the back of a car you are 30 times more likely to be thrown out through a window or door.

If you are thrown out of a car you have up to a 75% chance of dying.

Child restraint information:

The table below outlines the present legal situation for the wearing of seat belts and child restraints in Jersey and whose responsibility it is to comply with the law.

Bear in mind **this is the minimum standard you should aim for**. The law will be changing in the foreseeable future to bring our safety standards into line with Europe.

	Front seat	Rear seat	Whose responsibility
Children under 3 years of age	Appropriate child restraint must be used	Appropriate child restraint must be used if available	Driver
Children aged 3 to 11 years and under 1.5m (4ft 11ins approx) in height	Appropriate child restraint must be worn if available. If not, an adult seat belt must be worn	Appropriate child restraint must be worn if available. If not, an adult seat belt must be worn if available	Driver
Child aged 12 or 13 or younger child 1.5 metres (4ft 11ins approx) or more in height	Adult seat belt must be worn if available	Adult seat belt must be worn if available	Driver
Anyone aged over 14 years	Adult seat belt must be worn	Adult seat belt must be worn	The person responsible for wearing the seat belt

When choosing a seat to carry a child in bear the following points in mind:

- Never buy a second hand seat
- It must be up to EU standards with the relevant kite marks
- Keep the manual for the seat in the car with you
- The seat you purchase must be compatible for the car it is intended to be used in. Not every seat is compatible for every car

- The most important thing is that the child must be the correct weight for the seat
- The age given for the seat is a guide
- The seat must be installed correctly as per your manual (if in doubt ask for help, the shop that sells the seat should be able to demonstrate how to do this. If they can't don't buy it), it does matter
- The webbing to hold the child in, should be properly adjusted
- If the seat is involved in an accident or damaged it must be replaced

Should you decide to place a child in an adult seat belt, in your position as a carer, you would have to have a very good reason for doing this if involved in an accident and the child is hurt. Even if you had complied with the strict minimum of the Law, it is possible that you could be prosecuted under the children's law.

Please note the following important information below regards children using adult seat belts. Should you require clarification on any point below, you may contact me Philip Blake, Road Safety Officer on 612222.

The seat belt law concerning children in the UK and Europe was changed in 2006. Anyone intending to visit the UK or Europe and driving whilst there with children, is strongly advised to check the local situation on seat belt wearing.

Dangers in allowing children to use adult seat belts.

Adult seat belts are designed for people who are more than 1.5m in height. Anyone less than this height tends to find the seat belt rubbing against the side of their neck and the lap part of the belt tends to lie across the stomach instead of the hips and pelvic area.

Because of the belt rubbing against the neck, children tend to place the diagonal part of the seat belt either behind their back or under the arm that would normally be under the belt, this has the effect of the diagonal part of the belt now being positioned over the stomach and rib area of the body. Occasionally the diagonal is left rubbing against the neck.

In a collision at 30mph it is estimated that an unrestrained occupant is thrown forward with a force equal to 20 to 60 times its own body weight. The 'Think campaign' estimates the average body weight to be in the region of 3.5 tonnes. (Source Department of Transport dft)

Should a car occupant place the diagonal part of the seat belt around their back to improve comfort, then all the above forces in a crash will be placed around

the stomach area, rather than hip and pelvic area (particularly in the case of undersized children) with the possibility of incurring serious internal injuries. If the diagonal part of the belt is placed under the arm then the above forces will be focused against the ribs and stomach, again with the possibility of causing serious injuries.

When left rubbing against the neck, throat and neck injuries may than occur. The only safe way around this problem is to use a booster seat or cushion.

Types of child restraint available.

Child restraint type	Weight range	Age range (approximate)
Baby seat	Up to 13kgs	Birth to 9 -12 months
Child seat	9kgs – 18kgs	9 months - 4 years
Booster seat	15kgs – 25kgs	4 years – 6 years
Booster cushion	22kgs – 36kgs	6 years – 11 years

When choosing a restraint ensure it is compatible for your car and the shop shows you how to fit it. Keep the manual in your car. Never be tempted to buy a second hand car seat.

Infant carriers – Air bags

Air bag car technology has improved the safety for car occupants. However, it is now known that a rear facing infant carrier placed in the front of a car with an active airbag is extremely dangerous and can lead to the death of the infant. The new European Directive has addressed this issue by making it a legal requirement to de-activate the front airbag if an infant carrier is placed in the front of a car. It is intended this law will also be introduced in Jersey.