

CHILD CAR SEATS REVIEW

I remember the worry and fear I had when I was buying our first car seat, for the safe transportation home from the hospital for our precious new arrival. If you have similar worries, then fear no more... because this month we bring you the top 5 best buys from Which?

They have reviewed more than 90 of the best-selling car seats from all the leading brands and put them through a series of tests, the kind you would like to do yourself if you had the time.

The tests included the most important test "*how would the seat perform in a crash!*"

The seats tested were for belted and Isofix installations.

(**ISOFIX** is the international standard for attachment points for child safety seats in passenger cars.)

Maxi Cosi - Cabriofix with Easyfix base



- Which? score: 82%
- Type: Isofix and belt installation possible

Which? testing has become even tougher since they first made the Maxi Cosi Cabriofix with Easyfix base a Best Buy in 2006, but in the retest to the new standard it still passed with flying colours achieving the first '*Excellent*' child seat result.

Crash protection is excellent, and the instructions are clear.

Britax - BABY-SAFE plus (Isofix)



- Which? score: 81%
- Type: Isofix and belt installation possible

BABY-SAFE Plus is the new name for the Best Buy Britax Cosy Tot Premium (Isofix), for use with babies

from newborn up to 13kg (about one year). It can be installed (rearward-facing) using Isofix mounts or using the three-point adult seat belt and its performance is at Best Buy level in both modes. These results are for using it with Isofix mounts.

It has a support leg that stands on the floor of the car to provide stability in a front crash. This won't fit all cars, but Britax's website provides a list of compatible models, so we suggest you check before making your purchase.

Volvo - Infant seat



- Which? score: 81%
- Type: Isofix and belt installation possible

This Best Buy group 0+ seat has just been launched by Volvo, but it's the same design as the Britax Baby-Safe Plus (previously also known as the Britax Cosy Tot Premium (Isofix)) and is for use with babies from newborn up to 13kg (about one year). It can be installed (rearward-facing) using Isofix mounts or using the three-point adult seat belt and its performance is at Best Buy level in both modes. These results are for using it with Isofix mounts.

It has a support leg that stands on the floor of the car to provide stability in a front crash. This won't fit all cars, but as it is being sold by Volvo dealers, it should fit in Volvos unless the manufacturer advises otherwise. Britax's website provides a list of compatible models, so, if in doubt, check before buying.

Graco - Logico S HP



- Which? score: 80%
- Type: Belted installation only

The group 0+ Best Buy Graco Logico S HP is designed to carry children from birth up to 13kg (about a year old), rearward-facing, secured using the adult seat belt. It can be installed on its own, or with a special base that stays in the car. This makes it easier to fit and remove the seat with the baby already strapped in.

It makes the Best Buy grade in both modes, but the base costs extra. These results are for its use without the base.

Kiddy - Energy Pro



- Which? score: 79%
- Type: Belted installation only

The Group 1 Kiddy Energy Pro child car seat is an excellent seat, with high test scores making it a Best Buy. It is designed to carry children from nine to 18kg (about one to four years old), secured forward-facing, using the adult seat belt and an impact shield to help spread the crash loads.

The car seat fares well in front-end and side-impact collisions, and the child is exposed to low loads, as the impact shield does its job.

Information provided by: "which" magazine