



'ERF' and its Benefits

Extended Rear Facing

An 'extended rear facing car seat' or 'ERF seat' as it usually goes by, is a car seat for toddlers and preschoolers that are, just like the infant car seat, facing backwards. **Rear facing.**

Invented in Sweden in the early 1960s they have long been keeping Swedish children as safe as possible in the car, resulting in Sweden having *the lowest* child fatality rate in the world amongst children who die in a car accident.

When the seat is facing against the direction of travel, the child is pushed into the seat which supports the neck and spine, cushioning it and the load forces are spread over a larger area.

Choosing an extended rear facing car seat is the safest choice for your child.

[HTTP://WWW.ERFMISSION.COM](http://www.erfmission.com)

Benefits

1. In a crash at 50km/h, the neck of a forward facing child is subjected to crash forces of 180-300kg.

In order for a child to avoid injury, these loads should never exceed 130 kg. In a rear facing seat, the neck loads are only 40-80kg!

2. Your child's spinal column is in risk of stretching as far as 2 inches when forward facing in a car crash.

That may not sound like a lot but it only takes ¼ of an inch for the spinal cord inside the column to sever!

3. The British Medical Journal released a statement in 2009 stating that rear facing was the safest way to travel for all children under the age of 4 years old.

4. Children are not small adults. Their anatomy is vastly different, and their bones and spine are not fully fused together yet. This puts them at great risk in the event of an accident.

5. A baby's head is 25% of its body weight, compared to an adult who's head is only 6% of the body weight.

Before the age of 3, a child's spine consists of vertebra which are largely connected by cartilage, not bone. They are not fused together. The fusing of the vertebral only starts to happen after the age of 3 and isn't finished until approximately age 6.

"Knowledge is the key to making informed choices. Your children put their trust in YOU to do research and keep them as safe as possible in the car, so that should the day ever come where their safety is being tested - you can with a hand on your heart know that you did everything you could have done." - Therese Gilbert

[HTTP://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ERFMISSION](http://www.facebook.com/erfmission)

SOURCES: [HTTP://BIT.LY/ERFRESEARCH](http://bit.ly/ERFRESEARCH)

Know Before You Buy

- **What Percentile Is Your Baby/Toddler/Child?**

Have a look in their red book to follow the percentile line they are currently on and see what weight they are likely to be at 4 years old. If your child is likely to be 18kg (40lbs/2st8oz) the safest solution would be to look at rear facing car seats to 25kg (55lbs/4st) and not the more standard "18kg" car seat.

The reason for this is that high back boosters are for big kids, not pre-schoolers, and children under a minimum age of 4 years old should not use them for safety reasons.

- **Does It Fit My Car?**

It's a very common misconception that all car seats fit all cars. They do not.

This is why it's extremely important that you get your car seat fitted when buying it or if you do not have this option, seek advice both from your own car seat manual, YouTube (most car seats have a fitting video just waiting to be watched) or from a trained car seat expert.

The View is GREAT when ERF!



Leg space is not a problem!



If you are new to the idea of extended rear facing - I can imagine that one of your worries is your child's legs.

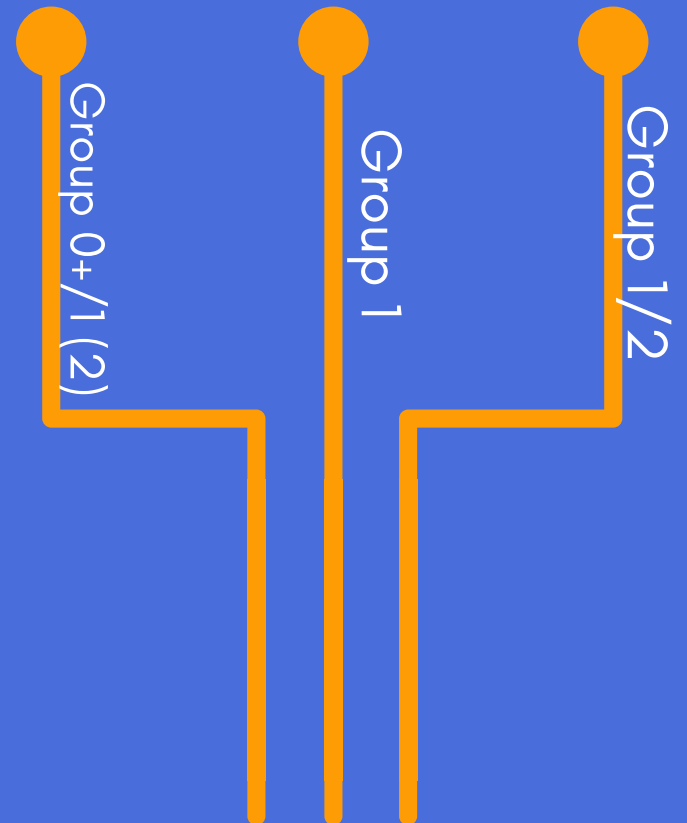
This is one of the most common fears, so you are not alone. However, I am happy to tell you that you have absolutely nothing at all to worry about!

If you are worried about your child's legs, turning the car seat forward facing is definitely not the answer. The 2nd most common injury in forward facing children is broken legs and lower body injuries.

In the event of a collision, the forward facing child is thrown forward in the car seat and many children's legs then crash into the front seat during this process, so turning the car seat forward facing is not going to help. It would only make it worse.

Some seats will provide more leg space than others. It should be noted that to date, there are no known cases of a child breaking legs rear facing due to them being rear facing!

ERF Groups



All extended rear facing car seats have a minimum rear-facing weight of 18kg (40lbs), those belong to Group 0+ (from birth) and Group 1.

But there are also those that rear face to 25kg (55lbs) and those are in Group 1/2.

You also have some that say '0-18/25 kg' but note that they often will state "from 6 months" and are not from birth.