

Family trips and holidays

Top tips for keeping your family safe on trips and holidays, at home and abroad



Many families find it harder to follow their usual road safety rules when travelling, at home and abroad, during the holidays. There are often unexpected challenges to deal with, such as different safety standards on public transport, or lack of child restraints in taxis. However, with a bit of planning you can have lots of fun and stay safe when you're out and about.

1 Try to avoid driving

Try to avoid driving entirely if you can. Every parent knows that children get bored on long journeys. Plan family holidays that don't involve lots of driving, either to get to your destination, or while you are on holiday.

2 Choose to walk or cycle

Walking or cycling with your children on holiday gives the whole family a chance to exercise, experience new sights together and spend time with each other, talking and learning about roads.

3 Look out for traffic when crossing the road

Make sure you look the right way for traffic when crossing the road – it may be coming from a different direction than what you are used to. Look out for bicycles and motorbikes too.

4 Choose public transport

Children love travelling on trains and buses, and this gives you an opportunity to chat with your children about the benefits of using public transport and reducing the numbers of cars on the roads.

If you are planning on travelling by coach, contact the coach company in advance and ask about child restraints. Many coach companies can provide child restraints.

5 Always use a child seat

Child seats are important. If you are planning to use a hire car or taxi, order a child seat when you book. Don't be put off by having to pay more money to rent a child seat with a hire car; your child's safety is priceless.

Brake recommends that all children use a child seat until they are 150cm tall. This is already the law in some countries.



6 Ensure child seats are the correct size and fitted correctly

Follow the fitting instructions exactly for any child seat. If possible, fit the seat in the middle of the back of the car. On every journey, always check that all children in your car are correctly restrained before setting off, and children know the importance of not fiddling with their straps or undoing them during the journey.

If you're travelling abroad, always check local rules and regulations about car seats – they may be very different.

7 Carry a booster cushion

As a last resort, and only for children between 125cm and 150cm, blow-up or folding booster cushions are now available and can be used, for example, in a taxi or on a coach for a short journey between an airport and a hotel.

8 Travelling with grandparents

If children are travelling with a grandparent, consider whether the grandparent is safe to drive. Eyesight deteriorates with age and significant amounts of vision can be lost without knowing it. Make sure your child's grandparent has a vision test every year and wears glasses if they need them.

9 Remember children are in the car

Never leave children alone in vehicles – especially not in the heat. Tragically, some very young children have died in cars when they have been forgotten by their parents and left in hot cars. Always remember your children come first.

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