**Should you use a booster seat with a backrest?**

**When should you use a booster seat?**

The regulation:

In vehicles with up to nine seats, including the driver’s seat, children who are equal to or smaller than 1.35 cm tall must travel in the back seats, using an approved child restraint system suited to their height and weight.

Thus when children reach a group 2 seat, they can use a child seat with a backrest designed for a weight of 18 to 25 kg, booster seats in group 2-3 for a weight of 18 to 36 kg, or group 3 booster cushions for a weight of 22 to 33 kg.

**Changes in R44 and R129 certification**

At present, certification for child seats is governed by two regulations: ECE R44/04 and R129. Both of them are undergoing changes in 2017 (the dates of which are still pending approval):

- **R44/04**: Booster seats without a backrest will not be authorized for Group 2 seats (for children weighing from 15 to 25 kg). This means that the only booster seats without a backrest that can be granted approval are those in Group 3 (from 22 to 36 kg). The recommendation for children up to 125 cm tall is that they use a booster seat with a backrest, though this is not mandatory, given that the changes to the R44/04 regulation are for certification purposes and do not ban their use.

- **R129**: The changes to this regulation will mean that all booster seats that are certified under this regulation will need to have a backrest.

For these changes to go into effect in Spain, they have to be published either in the Traffic Law or the regulations of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness.

These changes affect the certification process but not the families who use them, until such time as they appear in the Traffic Law or the regulations of the Ministry of Industry.

**Advantages of seats with a backrest**

1. It reduces the risk of damage to the head in the event of a side impact by up to six times compared to a seat without a backrest.
2. It offers greater side protection, as during an impact the child is kept in the seat at all times, thus avoiding a direct impact against the side of the vehicle.
3. It includes a guide to ensure the car’s seat belt is in the right position.

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