

# Vehicle Restraints & Containment FAQs

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## **While in the car, my dog loves to stand up and stick his head out the window. Won't restraints take the fun out of riding in the car?**

While restraints could initially lessen the thrill of a car ride, they dramatically increase your pet's safety, and will quickly become a normal part of travel if used consistently. Using [vehicle restraints & cages](#) in the car can help you protect your dog from getting hurt during quick stops, sharp turns, and accidents. Your dog will eventually come to associate his harness, seat, barrier, or crate with riding in the car, and will still be enthusiastic about it.

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## **What are the different types of vehicle restraints and containment available?**

Today's vehicle restraints and containment include easy-on, easy-off harnesses (similar to seat belts), car seats, barriers, and portable crates. They're all designed to provide your dog with comfortable, safe, strong restraints, and prevent him from falling or being thrown into the back of a seat - or worse, a window.

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## **Won't harnesses be uncomfortable for my dog?**

Harnesses included with vehicle restraints are typically adjustable, and many models feature optional padded harnesses, which further enhance comfort.

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## **How do I know which size harness to get for my dog?**

Some harnesses are designed to fit dogs in certain weight ranges, and some are designed to fit based on girth (the measurement around your dog's chest in inches). When selecting a harness, determine whether sizing is based on weight or girth measurement, and choose the size that best fits either weight or girth. If you're not sure about your dog's girth, simply measure around your dog's chest with a soft tape measure.

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## **Which restraints work best for small dogs?**

You can choose from several restraint options for your small dog. If you're looking to use a pet seat or harness restraint, the [Pet Booster Seat](#) works with pets up to 25 pounds. If you prefer to use a kennel-style crate/carrier choose a size that fits your small pet's measurements.

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## **Which restraints work best for large dogs?**

Large dogs are typically transported in kennel-style crates/carriers. As always, choose a size that fits your large pet's measurements. If you prefer to use a harness, the [Car Safety Harness](#) and [Kurgo Enhanced Strength Tru-Fit Smart Harness](#) both offer sizes to fit larger dogs. Again, be sure to measure your dog to find the perfect size. You may also wish to consider a vehicle barrier, such as the [Solvit Front Seat Net Pet Barrier](#) or [Vehicle Pet Barriers](#), which safely contains your dog in the rear of your vehicle.

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#### **Can I use restraints in the front seat?**

You should avoid putting your pet in the front seat, regardless of whether he is restrained. While it is tempting to keep your pet close to you in the front, your pet is simply safer in the back seat - especially if your car is equipped with front or side-impact airbags. Airbags can cause serious injury, and even death, for a pet. A pet safely restrained in the back seat will encounter fewer windows and be better surrounded by padded seats should you have to slam on the brakes or swerve suddenly.

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#### **What size crate/carrier should I choose for use in the car?**

Before you select a crate, measure your pet to be sure you select the right size. Measure from the floor to the top of your pet's shoulder, and add 3 inches; this is the minimum height for your pet's crate. Next, measure from his head to the base of his tail, and add 3 inches; this is the minimum length for his crate. Make sure that your pet can comfortably stand, sit, turn around, and lie down in it. As a general rule, when selecting a crate for an adult dog, if you're not sure which size to select, lean toward a larger size.

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#### **Can I use a wire cage in the car?**

Yes, you can use a wire cage in the car. In fact, your dog will likely enjoy the view a wire cage affords. However, keep in mind the fact that wire cages are often considerably heavier (and therefore much less portable) than plastic crates/carriers - you may wish to simply leave the cage in the car for future use. Many pet owners prefer to use a cage in the house, and a crate in the car. If you choose to use a [wire cage](#) to transport your pet, you might also consider adding a [thick cage pad](#) with soft, padded sides to maximize your pet's comfort. (These pads also work well in plastic crates.)

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#### **Are vehicle barriers safe?**

Absolutely. In fact, they dramatically decrease the chance that your pet will be injured in the event of a sudden stop, swerve, or accident. Many people wonder whether their dog could get his head caught between the bars of bar-style barriers. This concern can be completely alleviated by simply measuring your dog's head at different angles (looking straight at you, tipped to the side, at a cocked angle, etc.), then choosing either a bar-style barrier with narrow spacing or a mesh barrier. Bar-style vehicle barriers are typically not recommended for puppies or small dogs.

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#### **Do vehicle barriers work in any size vehicle?**

Drs. Foster & Smith offers the [Solvit Front Seat Net Pet Barrier](#) and [Vehicle Pet Barriers](#), available in various sizes that work in most vehicles. Be sure to measure your vehicle, then choose an appropriate size. You may need an extension panel if you have a particularly large vehicle or bucket seats. As always, you can [contact](#) Drs. Foster & Smith if you need assistance.

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