

## Ask Shelly: Would you take the Sit N Stroll on my Air New Zealand flight?

I'd like to offer a gold medal to every parent who survives an overseas flight with a 1-year-old (I get one, too!). And from Ohio to New Zealand? Though the journey will be well worth it, I'm sure, my heart goes out to this mom preparing for her upcoming overseas adventure.

*I am hoping to glean some wisdom from your travel expertise! I am travelling with a one year old for the first time in October. We are flying from Ohio to New Zealand and are flying with Air New Zealand. I have booked her a seat and had planned on taking the sit n stroll with us. I hit a snag in my brilliant plan when I saw on the ANZ website that the max width for car seats is 17". The sit n stroll is 18".*

*I called ANZ and told them I was comparing seat sizes on different airlines and they told me the actual seat size is 17.8". The arm rests don't fully lift (about 45 degrees). Would you still take the sit n stroll? I looked into getting the radian but it is about 3 in over the height limit they have on the website. I was really excited about the sit n stroll but am worried that they will take it from me in LA and I will be left with a one year old for 12 hours! Thanks for the help. Your website and blog is excellent!*



CARES may be a good option on flights to New Zealand.

Caroline

I would be surprised to find a long-haul aircraft that would not actually fit a [Sit N Stroll](#), but that certainly sounds like it's cutting it close. Like you, I would be worried about having it taken from me in L.A.! A 1-year-old is quite possibly the trickiest age for an overseas flight, and a car seat can be a great help in many ways. The Sit N Stroll also has such great advantages, as you know, and it would be a shame to have to leave it behind.

Here are my thoughts:

**If you take the Sit N Stroll onboard** and do have a problem installing it forward-facing, you could probably lift the arm rests to the 45 degrees and still install the Sit N Stroll rear-facing, as it may be used for children up to 30 lbs. There also are other advantages to flying with your toddler rear-facing, which I describe in [this blog post](#) .



**Still one problem:** But here's the funny thing about taking U.S. car seats (including the Sit N Stroll) to New Zealand, and Australia for that matter. Chances are that any car seat you would have purchased in the U.S. will not be considered legal once you get there. Not unless it includes this label proving that it's certified to New Zealand's standard.

As the NZ Transport Agency explains:

“...a restraint that complies with the United States Standard (FMVSS 213) must, in addition to any other markings, display the New Zealand Standard 'S' mark, to show they have been certified for use in New Zealand.”

Given this scenario, the simplest solution would probably be to bring your trusty travel stroller along and gate-check it as you go, and use a [CARES flight safety harness](#) for your flights. CARES can be used for children 1 year and older, and has now been certified in New Zealand and Australia, so you shouldn't run into any snafus with that plan. You can read all about my family's experience using CARES in [this review](#), and you can also opt to [rent CARES for your vacation](#) rather than purchase it (since you'll hopefully be able to use your Sit N Stroll next trip!). Then rent a New Zealand certified car seat to use during your stay (see my [worldwide directory of baby gear rental agencies](#)).

I think CARES is great in many cases, but I don't usually recommend it for overseas flights with 1-year-olds for these simple reasons: Most 1-year-olds are still too small to be very comfortable with just the straps holding them to the adult-size seat, which may also make it more difficult for them to sleep in flight (nowhere to lean their weary heads), and it is also easy to escape with only the easy-lift safety belt buckle of the airplane seat belt standing between them and grand adventure at 30,000 feet. If you use CARES, I'd recommend getting some sort of head support pillows to use during snooze times on the aircraft, and be sure to position your child by the window or at the center of the center row of seats to inhibit his escape route—just in case.

To help with head & snooze support, you might check out the [RestUpRight Pillow](#), the [Kiddopotamus Head Cradler](#), or the [Prop O's Head Support](#), all of which are designed to work with car seat straps, and should be an improvement to the CARES straps as well.

Good luck!

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***Shelly Rivoli** is the author of the award-winning family travel guide [Travels with Baby: The Ultimate Guide for Planning Trips with Babies, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children](#). She also publishes the [Travels with Baby Blog](#).*