

Car Seat Safety

Throughout the United States, there are laws that require car seat use for children. Make sure you know the car seat law



of any state you may travel to. Many states require that children stay in appropriate car seats through 8 years or up to 4 feet, 9 inches tall. Car seat belts are made for adults and cannot protect a small child. Car crashes are the main cause of serious injury and death in children. Correctly using a car seat can save a child's life or prevent a more serious injury.

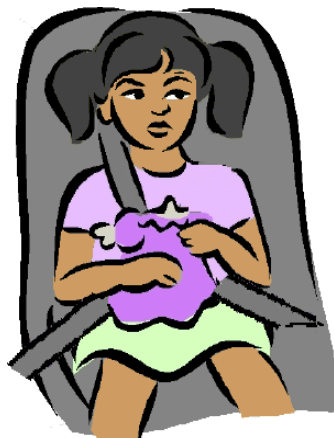
Car Seat Safety Guidelines

Where do I place the car seat?

- The back seat is the safest place for children under 12 years to ride.
- **Never** place a child in the front seat of a car or truck that has a passenger air bag.
- If a child is old enough to use an adult seatbelt and must ride in the front seat, **secure** the child correctly in the lap and shoulder seatbelt and **move** the front seat as far back as you can from the dashboard.

Is my child facing the right way?

- Babies until 1 year old and 20 pounds must ride **rear facing** in an infant car seat.
- Children over 1 year old and between 20 and 40 pounds can ride in a child car seat **facing forward**.



- Children between 40 and 80 pounds, often 4 to 8 years old, can ride in **booster seats**, which make the lap and shoulder belts fit correctly.
- Most children over 8 years old or 4 feet, 9 inches tall can fit correctly in a **lap and shoulder** seat belt.

Car Seat Safety Tips

- Not all car seats fit in all vehicles. When installed correctly, the car seat should not move more than one inch from side to side.
- Attend a car seat safety check in your community. These may be offered by your local health department.
- Keep harness straps snug and fasten the harness clip at armpit level. Harness straps should be at or below the shoulder level.
- When using a **rear facing** infant seat, recline the car seat to keep the baby's head from dropping forward. Put the infant car seat carrying handle down.
- Rolled towels or rolled receiving blankets can be placed along the sides of the child for extra support. **Never** place padding under or behind the baby.
- The child should not have a heavy coat on under the straps of the harness. If extra warmth is needed, use a blanket over the seat.



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