

Car Seat Checklist

Using the right car seat for your child is the best way to reduce the risk of injury or death in a crash. Follow this checklist to help keep your child safe while traveling in a vehicle.



- Always read the instruction manuals for your car seat and vehicle. They will tell you how to install the seat and the proper angle it should be at. If your car seat has a handle, the instruction manual will show you the safest position to use it while traveling.
- Children should remain rear facing in a car seat until at least age 2, but they are safest if they rear face as long as the weight and height restrictions on their car seat allow. Use a convertible seat to keep your child rear facing longer.
- Never put a rear-facing car seat in front of an active airbag. Children who ride in the front seat with an airbag are at higher risk of injury or death due to their smaller size.
- Remove all bulky clothing and coats before buckling children up for travel. Cover kids with blankets or put their coat on backwards to help keep them warm after buckling. Make sure the child's face is not covered to help prevent suffocation.
- Check to be sure that you are using the correct harness slots. Secure the harness at or just below the child's shoulders for rear facing and at or just above their shoulders for forward facing.
- Make sure the car seat chest clip is at child's armpit level and is fastened correctly.
- If not using the LATCH straps, be sure to secure them in the proper place on the car seat.
- Make sure you are using the correct seat belt or lower anchor belt path for either rear-facing or forward-facing direction of travel.
- Children that have reached the maximum height or weight guidelines for their forward-facing seat should use a booster seat until the vehicle belt fits properly. This usually happens when they are 4 feet 9 inches tall and are 10 to 12 years old.
- All children 13 years old or younger should ride in the back seat because they are smaller and can get hurt by the front seat airbags.
- Never add anything to the car seat that did not come with the seat. The seat was crash tested the way it comes from the manufacturer. Adding items like toys or extra cushioning may result in injury or death in the event of a crash.
- Use a carseat only for vehicle travel. If the car seat is removed from the vehicle, then remove the child from the seat. Do not leave a child unattended in a vehicle or car seat for any reason.