

Frequently Asked Questions

Which seat is the best?

The best seat for you is the one that fits your child and your vehicle properly, and that you can use properly each time.

Is it OK to buy a car seat from a garage sale or thrift shop?

No, buying a car seat that has already been used is dangerous and illegal. Buy a new car seat to keep your child as safe as possible.

Is it better to use LATCH or the seat belt?

As long as your child is within the weight limits of the LATCH (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children) system, both are equally safe. We recommend you use whichever method you can use properly each time. **NEVER** use both.

Can I use accessories with my child's seat?

No. Accessories such as mirrors and vehicle seat protectors are not crash-tested and could injure your child in a collision. This includes accessories that are made by the same manufacturer as your child's car seat.

Should I always replace my seat after a crash?

Replace any car seat that has been involved in a moderate to severe crash. Seats involved in minor crashes may not need to be replaced, but check your car seat for visible damage. Minor crashes include those in which the vehicle is not totaled, the door nearest the car seat is undamaged, occupants do not suffer injuries, and air bags do not deploy.

Visit NHTSA.gov for a full checklist of when to replace car seats after a crash.

When is my child ready for the next car seat?

Your child is ready for the next car seat once he or she exceeds the weight or height limit indicated on the current car seat.



We Treat Kids Better



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Child Passenger Safety

CHLA.org/KOHLs

Kohl's Safety and Injury Prevention Program

Did You Know?

- In the United States, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death in people ages 4 to 33.
- In 2011, more than 800 children ages 14 and younger died and 180,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes. More than 50 percent of these children were not wearing seat belts.

Sources: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

California Laws

A child must be restrained in a rear-facing seat until he or she is at least 1 year old and weighs 20 pounds. However, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that your child remain rear-facing until age 2. Since children benefit most from rear-facing protection, the CHLA's car seat technicians recommend keeping your child rear facing to the maximum weight limit of their car seat, independent of age. Rear-facing protects your child's head, neck and spine in a crash.

As of 2012, California law requires that children be properly restrained in a car seat or booster seat in the rear seat of a vehicle until they are 8 years old or 4 feet 9 inches tall. A child must ride in the rear vehicle seat until age 12.



Types of Car Seats

Rear-Facing-Only Seat – Used for children from birth to 22-35 pounds and should never be used facing forward.

Convertible Seat – May be used rear-facing from birth and for weights up to 40. Once your child has reached age 2 or exceeds the maximum rear-facing weight limit of the seat, it can be used facing forward until its forward-facing weight limit is reached.

Combination Seat – This is a forward-facing seat that can be used with a harness and then as a booster seat once your child exceeds the maximum weight limit of the harness.

Booster Seat – A seat for children who have exceeded the maximum weight limit of their car seat but are too small to use only the vehicle's seat belt. A booster seat helps position the vehicle's seat belt properly to fit your child.

Weight limits vary by car seat manufacturer; check labels and owners manuals for details.

Is Your Child Done With the Booster Seat?

Before your child is ready to use just the vehicle's seat belt, he or she must pass a few tests. If you answer no to any of these questions, your child is not ready to stop using the booster seat.

- Is your child over 8 years old?
- Is your child at least 4 feet 9 inches tall?
- Does your child pass the **five-step test**?
 1. Does the child sit all the way back against the car's seat?
 2. Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the seat?
 3. Does the belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm?
 4. Is the lap belt as low as possible, across the hips?
 5. Can the child stay seated like this for the whole trip?

Things to Remember

- Check labels on car seats to determine child weight and height limits.
- Always place the harness chest clip at armpit level.
- Make sure the harness is tight across the child's chest and torso.
- Rear-facing seat – The harness threads through the seat at or below shoulder level.
- Forward-facing seat – The harness threads through the seat at or above shoulder level.
- Most seats expire after six years. Check the labels on your car seat for an expiration date. If your seat is not clearly marked with an expiration date, then your seat expires six years after the manufacturing date.

Installation Tips

- Follow car seat owners manual instructions when routing the vehicle seat belt/LATCH system through the car seat.
- If using a vehicle seat belt to install a seat, make sure the seat belt is in locked mode.
- Ensure a tight fit of the car seat. It shouldn't move more than one inch in any direction once installed.
- When installing a forward-facing seat, always use the top tether to secure the car seat to your vehicle.
- When using the LATCH system, you should not use the vehicle's seat belt. Use either the seat belt or the lower anchors and tether but never both.
- Never place a car seat in front of an air bag.