

# Which Car Seat Does Your Child Need?

**Infants should ride in *rear-facing safety seats* as long as possible; at least until they are 12 months old and weigh 20 pounds.**

- Facing the rear of the vehicle protects a young child's neck and spinal cord from violent crash forces.
- Never put a rear-facing child in a front seat with a passenger air bag!
- Recline the seat so your child's head can rest flat against the shell.
- Keep harness straps snug and fasten harness clip at armpit level.
- Route harness straps in harness slots that are at or slightly below shoulder level.

**Kids over one year old, who weigh 20-40 pounds and can no longer ride rear-facing, should ride in *forward-facing child safety seats*.**

- Place child safety seat in upright position.
- Keep harness straps snug and flat.
- Fasten harness clip at armpit level.
- Route harness straps in the reinforced slots at or slightly above shoulder level.

**Kids over 40 pounds must use *booster seats* or other appropriate child restraints until the lap and shoulder belts fit correctly (around age 8).**

- Kids this size are too small for adult safety belts alone to fit correctly.
- A booster seat positions the lap belt snugly over hips and upper thighs and the shoulder belt snugly across the chest and shoulder.
- If your vehicle has a low seat back and your child's ears end up above it, you need a high back booster seat to protect the child's neck.

**Once safety belts fit children correctly (usually around age 8), the *lap and shoulder belts* should be used.**

- To fit correctly in a safety belt, kids must be tall enough to sit all the way back against the vehicle seat with knees bent over the edge.
- The lap belt should fit snugly over hips and upper thighs and the shoulder belt snugly across the chest and shoulder.
- Never put shoulder belts under kids' arms or behind their backs.

**If your child weighs more than 40 pounds and you only have lap belts in your back seat, you may want to:**

- Obtain a child safety seat that is specifically designed for kids over 40 pounds.
- Contact your auto manufacturer about whether shoulder belts can be installed in your back seat; or
- Correctly restrain your child in the front seat, using a booster seat and the lap and shoulder belts. Be sure to move the vehicle seat as far back as possible.

## Before You Hit the Road, Read This!

Take the time to make sure your child is riding safely. Study your vehicle owner's manual and child safety seat instructions carefully.

o Never place a rear-facing child in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger air bag. If you must use the front seat, contact your vehicle manufacturer about the availability of an air bag on/off switch.

o Send in the child safety seat registration card to be notified in case your child safety seat is recalled. If you have any questions about recalls, call the manufacturer, visit [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) or call 888-DASH-2-DOT.

o Use the correct child safety seat belt path and attaching system.

o Correctly install the child safety seat in the vehicle.

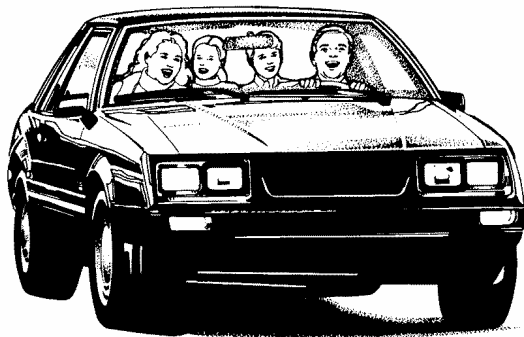
o Get a tight fit - an installed child safety seat should not move more than one inch from side to side or toward the front of the vehicle.

o Check your vehicle owner's manual to see how to lock your child safety seat in place. Some vehicle seating positions require special installation techniques.

o Replace any child safety seat that has been involved in a crash.



The back seat is generally the safest place for a child to ride. While air bags can save lives, kids riding in the front seat can be seriously injured or killed when an air bag comes out in a crash. Even without air bags, the back seat is safer.



Remember to buckle everyone in before starting the car!

Information provided by the Nat'l SAFE KIDS Campaign and distributed by Kansas Farm Bureau.