

TIPS FOR CHOOSING AND USING A CAR SEAT, BELT-POSITIONING BOOSTER SEAT, AND SEAT BELT

The Best Car Seat Fits the Child, Fits the Vehicle, and is Used Correctly Every Time

Selection: Choose the Right Car Seat

- Pennsylvania law requires children younger than two years of age to always ride in a rear-facing car seat.
- The car seat should be appropriate for the child's age, weight, height, and developmental needs.
 - Examine the car seat to confirm it is in good condition, has not been recalled, and has not reached the expiration date. Secondhand car seats are not recommended.
- Confirm the car seat can be correctly secured in the vehicle.
- Read the car seat instructions and/or label to make sure the car seat is appropriate for the child's age, weight and height.
 - **Rear-Facing:** The child's head is at least one-inch below the top of the car seat shell.
 - **Forward-Facing:** The child's ears are not above the top of the car seat shell.
 - **Belt-Positioning Booster Seat:** Positions the lap belt low and snug across the child's hips/upper thighs and the shoulder belt is across the center of the chest and shoulder.
 - **Seat Belt:** The child is:
 - Tall enough to sit on the vehicle seat with their back in contact with the vehicle seat, without slouching.
 - Able to bend their knees over the front edge of the vehicle seat and their feet are flat on the floor.
 - Able to position the seat belt correctly across their body.



Direction: Face the Car Seat the Right Way



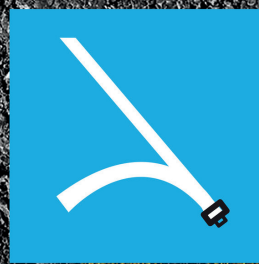
Rear-Facing: Keep the child in a rear-facing car seat until age 2 or until they reach the maximum weight or height allowed by the car seat manufacturer's instructions. When the child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, secure the child in a forward-facing car seat.

- Always recline the rear-facing car seat following the car seat instructions.



Forward-Facing: Check the car seat instructions to determine the correct forward-facing car seat angle.

- Car seats may need to be placed in the upright position or may allow for the car seat to be in a semi-upright position when forward-facing.



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Location: Choose an Appropriate Location in the Vehicle

- Never place a rear-facing car seat in the front passenger seat when there is an active frontal air bag.
- Secure all children younger than 13 years of age in the back seat of vehicles for the best protection.
- Choose a seating location that allows for the correct installation of the car seat.
 - Determine whether the seat belt or lower anchor connectors will be used to secure the car seat.
- Select a seating location with a tether anchor for forward-facing car seats.



Harness Adjustment and Fit: Adjust the Harness to Fit the Child

- Place the child with their back and bottom against the car seat back.
- Adjust the harness straps following the car seat instructions.
- Secure the child with a snug harness.
 - A snug harness does not permit excess webbing to be pinched at the shoulders once the harness is buckled and correctly tightened.
- Position the harness retainer clip at armpit level.



Installation: Secure the Car Seat to the Vehicle Seat

- Read and follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions.
- Place the car seat on the vehicle seat, adjusting the recline angle as required.
- Thread and tighten the seat belt or lower anchor connectors through the correct belt path.
- Confirm the car seat does NOT move side-to-side or front-to-back more than 1-inch when tested at the belt path.
- For forward-facing car seats, attach and secure the tether when using the seat belt or lower anchors, whenever possible.



Scan for helpful installation videos from NHTSA

