

Forward-Facing Car Seat Basics



Selection - Direction

- ◆ When children outgrow the rear-facing car seat, secure them in a forward-facing car seat with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of the car seat.
- ◆ Read the car seat instructions and/or label to make sure the car seat is appropriate for the child's age, weight, and height.
- ◆ Be aware of height and weight limits as a child grows.
- ◆ Select a forward-facing car seat where the mid-point of the back of the head or the top of the ears are not above the top of the car seat shell.
- ◆ Forward-facing car seats reduce the risk of injury for children by 71% compared to children using the seat belt only.

Installation

- ◆ Read and follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions to determine the appropriate upright or semi-upright angle when installing the car seat in the forward-facing position.
- ◆ Thread and tighten the seat belt or lower anchor connectors through the correct forward-facing belt path.
- ◆ Use the tether when installing the forward-facing car seat with the seat belt or the lower anchors, whenever possible.
- ◆ Confirm the car seat does NOT move side-to-side or front-to-back more than 1-inch when tested at the belt path.



Convertible Car Seat

- ◆ Converts from rear-facing to forward-facing.
- ◆ Secures child forward-facing once the child has outgrown the rear-facing height or weight limit.
 - ◆ Forward-facing weight range is from 20 - 25 pounds up to 40 - 65 pounds.
- ◆ Car seat instructions may recommend the forward-facing car seat be secured in the upright position.



All-In-One Car Seat

- ◆ Converts from rear-facing to forward-facing with a harness to a belt-positioning booster.
- ◆ Forward-facing harness weight range is 22 - 30 pounds up to 65 pounds.
- ◆ Once a child reaches the maximum weight or height limit for the harness system, remove or store the harness and use as a belt-positioning booster seat.



Combination Car Seat

- ◆ Converts from a forward-facing with a harness to a belt-positioning booster seat.
- ◆ Forward-facing weight range is 22 - 30 pounds up to 40 - 65 pounds.
- ◆ The back of a combination car seat is reinforced. Any harness slot can be used as long as it is at or above the child's shoulders.
- ◆ Once a child reaches the maximum weight or height limit for the harness system, remove the harness and use as a belt-positioning booster seat.



Harness Adjustment and Fit For Forward-Facing Car Seats

- ◆ The child is seated with their back and bottom against the back of the car seat.
- ◆ Harness adjustment:
 - ◆ Thread harness through the reinforced slots at or above the child's shoulders.
 - ◆ Place the harness over the child's shoulders and buckle.
 - ◆ The harness keeps the child in the car seat in a crash.
 - ◆ The crotch strap keeps the child from moving forward.
- ◆ Tighten the harness straps snugly.
 - ◆ A snug harness does not permit excess webbing to be pinched at the shoulder or hips once the harness is buckled.
- ◆ Place the harness retainer clip at armpit level.



Forward-Facing Car Seat Basics



The mid-point of the back of the child's head or the top of the ears are not above the shell of the car seat.

Harness is snug and you cannot pinch any extra webbing between thumb and forefinger.

Chest clip is at armpit level.



Harness straps are threaded through the slots that are at or above the child's shoulders.



The child is seated with their body in contact with the car seat back.

Tips to Achieve Correct Use of a Forward-Facing Car Seat

Selection

- Read the car seat instructions and/or label to make sure the car seat is appropriate for the child's age, weight, and height.
- Confirm that the child's ears are not above the top of the car seat shell. Be aware of minimum and maximum height, and weight limits.
- Seat the child in the car seat with their back and bottom in contact with the back of the car seat.
- A child should remain in a forward-facing car seat with a harness until reaching the maximum weight or height limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer.

Direction

- 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.



Location

- Choose a seating location that allows for the correct use and installation of the car seat.
- Determine whether the seat belt or lower anchor connectors will be used to secure the car seat. Read the car seat instructions and the vehicle manual to determine lower anchor weight limits. Weight limits on lower anchors and tether can affect whether the seat belt or lower anchors can be used to secure the car seat.
- Choose a seating location with a seat belt that can be locked and a tether anchor or with an approved LATCH system, (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children).
- Secure all children younger than 13 years of age in the back seat of vehicles for best protection.

Harness Adjustment and Fit

- Place the harness through the harness slots **at or above** the shoulder following the car seat manufacturer's instructions. Assure the buckle is positioned close to the child.
- Secure the child with a snug harness. A snug harness does not permit excess webbing to be pinched at the shoulder once the harness is buckled and correctly tightened. Be sure to pull extra webbing from the hip area to the shoulders.
- Place the harness retainer clip at armpit level.

Installation

- Read and follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions for the appropriate upright or semi-upright angle when installing the car seat in the forward-facing position.
- Thread and tighten the seat belt or lower connectors through the correct forward-facing belt path. Do not exceed the maximum weight limit of the lower anchors.
- Attach and secure the tether when using the seat belt or lower anchors, whenever possible.
- Confirm the car seat does NOT move side-to-side or front-to-back more than 1-inch when tested at the belt path.