Car Seat & Booster Seat Buying Guide



Select the Right Seat

Select the car seat, booster seat, or seat belt that is right for the child's age, weight, height, and developmental needs. The right car seat, booster seat, or seat belt fits the child and the car, and will be used correctly every trip - every time. Not only will the child ride as safely as possible, a child who is secured during every ride will establish a foundation for a lifelong habit of seat belt use every time the child travels.

- ♦ Select a car seat that will accommodate your child facing the correct direction. Pennsylvania law requires children younger than 2 years of age to always ride in a rear-facing car seat.
- Select a car seat with an adjustable harness height to offer options for children as they grow. Harness straps should be at or below the shoulders for rear-facing and at or above the child's shoulders for forward-facing.
 - ◆ Some car seats have adjustable positions for crotch straps for a better fit as the child grows.
- Booster seats keep the lap belt from causing injury to a child's abdomen and keeps the shoulder belt in the proper position to provide upper body protection.
- Seat belts can be used to safely secure children when the lap belt stays low and snug across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt crosses the center of the chest and shoulder.









4 THINGS YOU NEED TO REGISTER YOUR CHILD'S CAR SEAT. MANUFACTURER'S NAME DATE OF MANUFACTURE MODEL NAME DOLL TO BE TO B

Register Your Car Seat for Recall and Safety Notices

Register car seats to ensure you will be notified about recalls and guided through the repair process. Car seats can be registered:

 Online at the car seat manufacturer's website, using the model number and manufacture date that is found on a sticker on the car seat.

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 Register the car seat online at <u>www.safercar.gov/parents</u>. Select "Car Seat and Booster seats and then Registration". Complete the online form and submit. It takes just a few minutes to register your car seat.

OR

 By filling out the registration card that came with the car seat. The registration card has the car seat's information. Mail the card; no postage required.



Car Seat Instructions Vehicle Owner's Manual

Choose the Right Car Seat

- ◆ Always read the car seat instructions and the vehicle owner's manual. Don't forget to register the car seat to be notified of recalls.
- Always check the minimum and maximum weight allowed for a car seat. Select a car seat that is correct for the child's weight and height.
- Select a car seat, belt-positioning booster seat, or seat belt that is in good condition (not been involved a crash, not expired or recalled, no labels missing) and appropriate for the child.
- ♦ Always follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions for guidelines on when the car seat or booster seat must be replaced.

- Rear-Facing: Select a car seat that allows the child's head to be at least one-inch (1") from the top of the back of the car seat.
- Forward-Facing: Select a car seat where the mid-point of the head or the top of the ears are not above the top of the shell of the car seat.
- Belt-Positioning Booster Seat: Select a booster seat that
 positions the vehicle's lap belt low and snug on the hips/upper
 thighs and the shoulder belt across the center of the child's
 shoulder and chest.
- Seat Belt: Select a lap and shoulder belt when the child is:
 - ✓ Tall enough to sit on the vehicle seat without slouching.
 - ✓ Able to keep their back against the vehicle seat back.
 - ✓ Able to sit with their knees naturally bent over the front edge of the vehicle seat.
 - ✓ Able to keep their feet flat on the floor.



Car Seat Non-Regulated Products



There are many products sold separately as an accessory for use with a car seat. Adding products to the car seat that make minor fit adjustments or provide comfort for the child could change how the car seat will perform in a crash, increasing the potential for serious injury or death. Using any product that was not provided by the car seat manufacturer or one that did not come with the car seat may affect the safety of the car seat in a crash and should not be used. Car seats must meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213 (FMVSS 213); however, the standard does not address products that are sold separately so they are considered "non-regulated." There is no way to know how infant head pillows and support items, shoulder pads/harness covers, toys and mirrors, seat protectors, or anything else that does not come with the car seat will change how it performs during a crash. Car Seat manufacturers do not recommend using "non-regulated" products with their car seats, unless made or allowed by original car seat manufacturer for use with its product. Correctly used padding or support items that come with the car seat have been tested with the car seat and are approved for use by the car seat manufacturer. **ALWAYS** check product instructions and the car seat manufacturer's instructions.

What are non-regulated car seat products?

Non-regulated, sometimes called "aftermarket", car seat products are items that did not come from the car seat manufacturer and are marketed and purchased separately from the specific car seat. The non-regulated products do not have any required Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard that must be met. The products are often used for "comfort" but are not limited to harness covers, infant supports or inserts, bunting bags, and warming accessories. No one except the car seats manufacturer can confirm a product is safe to use with their car seat. If there is concern with child comfort or fit in a car seat, read and follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions, or contact the car seat manufacturer or a Child Passenger Safety Technician for help.

What do car seat manufacturers say?

Evenflo

Car seat manufacturers have always been clear about the use of non-regulated products with their car seats. Warnings prohibiting the use of these items are found in the car seat instructions. Examples:

Chicco

DO NOT use any accessories, pads or products not included with this Child Restraint, unless approved by Chicco USA. Doing so will void the warranty of this Child Restraint.

DO NOT attach additional padding, toys, or other devices not made by Evenflo or described in these instructions for the child restraint. Items not tested with the child restraint could injure the child. Additional pads or pillows may interfere with the function of the harness system, or cause breathing problems if the child's head falls forward, increasing the risk of serious injury or death.

Graco

DO NOT MODIFY YOUR INFANT RESTRAINT AND BASE or use any accessories or parts supplied by other manufacturers.

The non-regulated items have not been crash tested by the car seat manufacturer, so there is no way of knowing what the outcome of a crash may be when using the item. Aside from the safety aspect of using non-regulated products, Pennsylvania law states that the car seat must be used following the car seat manufacturer's instructions.

Head rests, pillows, and infant support items:

Follow car seat manufacturer's instructions to safely use these items. Some manufacturer's may sell additional products to be used with some or all of their specific car seats. Always check with the manufacturer of your car seat before using any additional products. **NOTE:** Some inserts provided with the car seat have weight limits. Remove inserts as directed in the car seat instructions.

Shoulder harness covers: Use only harness comfort covers the manufacturer has provided for the specific car seat. Adding shoulder harness covers may interfere with tightening the harness and placement of the harness retainer clip. A loose harness increases the forward movement of the child in a crash, increasing the risk of injury. Always follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions to secure the child with a snug harness for maximum protection.

Mats and Vehicle Seat Covers: Numerous products are offered to protect the vehicle seat when using a car seat. Some car seat manufactures allow the use of a towel or thin blanket, their seat protection product or a other options. Check with the car seat manufacturer for recommendations to protect vehicle seats when using their car seat.







Balancing Warmth and Safety

- Warm the vehicle up in advance of taking the child outside, if possible.
- Secure the child with a snug harness. Make sure the harness retainer clip is at armpit level.
- Cover the child with a blanket over the top of the harness straps or turn the coat around and put it on backward.
- Use of aftermarket covers, essentially fitted blankets, designed to give additional warmth may be an option if allowed by the car seat manufacturer. Covers approved by the car seat manufacturer for a specific car seat have been tested and will not compromise the child's safety. Ensure the cover does not affect the correct installation and use of the car seat.

Toys and mirrors: While parents might find these products to be helpful to keep baby from fussing, these can become serious risks in the event of a crash. A mirror could break or come loose from the head restraint and cause additional injury. Toys hanging from the car seat can hurt the child if contact is made during a crash. If you feel these items are necessary, only select items that are made of soft and flexible materials.

NOT Recommended for Use