

Car Seat Regulations

How do I safely buckle my kids?



Do's	Don'ts
Do restrain your child appropriately for his or her age, weight and height.	Don't put your child in the front seat. Children 12 and under should sit in the back seat appropriately restrained.
Do follow directions that come with the child safety seat, as well as the child passenger restraint directions in your vehicle's owner's manual.	Don't place a child in front of an active airbag because they are made to protect adults, not children. Children 12 and under should ride in the back seat, away from air bags.



Infants: Birth until at least 20 pounds AND at least 1 year old

- Infants should ride in rear-facing car seats as long as possible, until they are at least 12 months old and weigh at least 20 pounds. Keep children rear-facing to 30-35 pounds if your car seat allows it.
- Children at least 1 year old, weighing 20 to 40 pounds that can no longer ride rear-facing should ride in forward-facing car seats secured with harnesses and tethers. Use either a seat belt or the LATCH system to secure the child restraint. Do not use both systems.
- Use either a rear-facing infant seat or rear-facing convertible seat.
- Route harness straps in lower slots, at or below shoulder level.
- Fasten the top of the harness clip at armpit level.
- Keep all children in a back seat. Never place a rear-facing infant in the front seat with an active airbag.
- Keep harness straps snug. Once buckled you should not be able to pinch the webbing at the shoulders.
- Recline the infant's child restraint at no greater than a 45-degree angle, according to manufacturer instructions.



Toddlers: Over 20 pounds AND over 1 year old; Up to 40 pounds

(Once rear-facing infant seat or rear-facing convertible seat is outgrown)

- Use forward-facing car seat.
- Route harness straps in designated reinforced slots, at or above shoulder level.
- Fasten harness clip at armpit level.
- Keep harness straps snug.



Young Children: Over 40 pounds; Up to at least age 8, unless 4'9"

(Once forward-facing car seat is outgrown)

- Belt positioning booster seat with a lap and shoulder seat belt.
- Place shoulder strap over the shoulder and snug across the chest.
- Place lap belt low and tight on hips, NOT over stomach.
- Make sure shoulder strap is never across the neck, face or arm.



Older Children: Over age 8 or 4'9"

(Once belt-positioning booster seat is outgrown)

- Use a lap and shoulder seat belt.
- Shoulder belt fits over the shoulder and across the chest.
- Lap belt should fit low and tight on hips, NOT over stomach.
- Shoulder belt should NEVER be placed under arms or behind back.

Recommendations based upon [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Guidelines](#).