

Child Car Seat Safety:

ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR PARENTS



Birth to 12 Months

A rear-facing car seat is safest for your child. Infant, convertible, and 3-in-1 seats are all secure options. Infant seats are usually used up to one year or until height and weight limits are reached. Convertible and 3-in-1 seats last longer; follow the manufacturer's guidelines to ensure safety.

1 to 3 years

Keeping your child rear-facing is still the safest option. Many convertible and 3-in-1 car seats work well in this position for younger ages. Transition to front-facing only after your child reaches the seat's maximum height or weight limit. Some convertible seats allow front-facing up to 80 lbs, so choose a style you love—you'll be using it for years!

4 to 7 Years

By school age, your child can likely ride front-facing. Use the five-point harness until they reach the seat's height and weight limits. Combination, convertible, and 3-in-1 seats should still fit your growing child.

8 to 12 Years

Even though your child seems more grown up, they're probably not ready to go without a safety seat just yet. A booster seat is ideal at this stage. Available with or without backs in various styles, booster seats use your car's seatbelt to provide essential protection.

13 Years and Up

Although the back seat remains the safest spot for your teen, at this age they are legally allowed to sit in the front passenger seat.



Additional Tips

Keeping your child rear-facing as long as possible—typically up to 35-50 lbs in most convertible seats—is five times safer in a crash. Although your tall two-year-old might look cramped, kids often adjust comfortably in rear-facing seats.

To determine if your child can safely stop using a booster, check these points: Can they sit with their back fully against the car seat, knees bent over the seat edge, and feet flat on the floor? Does the lap belt rest across their thighs (not their stomach), and the shoulder belt lie across their shoulder and chest (not neck or face)? Lastly, can they stay seated properly without slouching, leaning forward, or fidgeting with the seatbelt? If so, it may be safe to consider moving on from the booster, but there's no need to rush.