

Car Seat Safety

Throughout the United States, there are laws that require car seat use for children. In Ohio, parents or guardians by law must use a car seat for all children under 40 pounds and under 4 years of age. Make sure you know the car seat law of any state you may travel to. Many states require that children stay in appropriate car seats through 8 years or up to 4 feet, 9 inches tall. Car seat belts are made for adults and cannot protect a small child.

Car crashes are the main cause of serious injury and death in children. Correctly using a car seat can save a child's life or prevent a more serious injury.

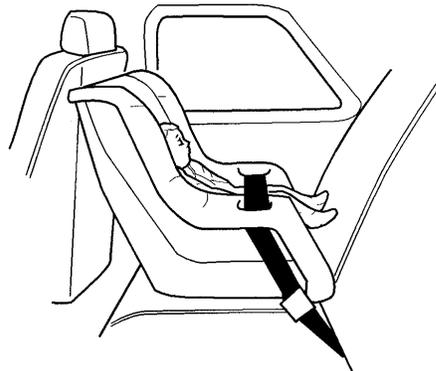
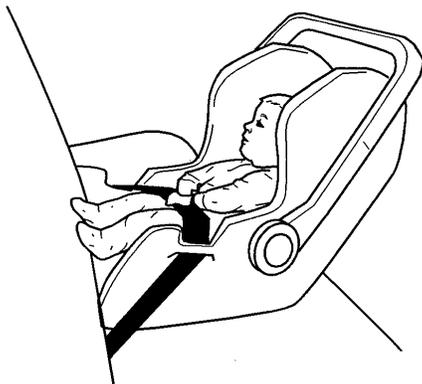
Car Seat Safety Guidelines

Where do I place the car seat?

- The back seat is the safest place for children under 12 years to ride.
- **Never** place a child in the front seat of a car or truck that has a passenger air bag.
- If a child is old enough to use an adult seatbelt and must ride in the front seat, **secure** the child correctly in the lap and shoulder seatbelt and **move** the front seat as far back as you can from the dashboard.

Is my child facing the right way?

- Babies until 1 year old and 20 pounds must ride **rear facing** in an infant car seat.



- Children over 1 year old and between 20 and 40 pounds can ride in a child car seat **facing forward**.



- Children between 40 and 80 pounds, often 4 to 8 years old, can ride in **booster seats**, which make the lap and shoulder belts fit correctly.



- Most children over 8 years old or 4 feet, 9 inches tall can fit correctly in a **lap and shoulder** seat belt.

Car Seat Safety Tips

- Not all car seats fit in all vehicles. When installed correctly, the car seat should not move more than one inch from side to side.
- Attend a car seat safety check in your community. These may be offered by your local health department.
- Keep harness straps snug and fasten the harness clip at armpit level. Harness straps should be at or below the shoulder level.

- When using a **rear facing** infant seat, recline the car seat to keep the baby's head from dropping forward. Put the infant car seat carrying handle down.
- Rolled towels or rolled receiving blankets can be placed along the sides of the child for extra support. **Never** place padding under or behind the baby.
- The child should not have a heavy coat on under the straps of the harness. If extra warmth is needed, use a blanket over the seat.