

# Car Seats and Boosters

Placing your children in safety seats is being safe! IT'S ALSO THE LAW!

## Buckle-Up Basics

The correct use of a child restraint on every trip can prevent 70 per cent of crash-related deaths and serious injuries to child passengers. However, roadside checks find only 51.6 percent of children buckled up at all. During 2002, Buckle Up Bears clinics found that less than 20 percent of all car seats checked were correctly installed.

These tips from the Canada Safety Council will help you make sure your child is properly protected in the car.

- Rear-Facing Infant Seat: Birth to 10 kg (22 lb.)
- Forward-Facing Child Seat: 10 - 18 kg (22 - 40 lb.)
- Booster Seat: 18 kg (40 lb.) or over
- Seat-Belt

## The Fundamentals

- Make sure the restraint system has CMVSS (Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standard) on the label and comes with full manufacturers instructions.
- Check the weight and height limits of the seat to be sure that it is correct for your child.
- Before you buy a seat, try it in your vehicle to be sure that it can be installed properly and can be tightened so there is little movement.
- Always follow the instructions according to the child seat manufacturer's manual and the vehicle owner's manual.
- Transport Canada recommends that children 12 and under should be properly restrained in the back seat especially if there is a passenger-side air bag.

### Rear-Facing Infant Seat • Birth to 10 kg (22 lb.)

- An infant-only seat offers the best fit for young babies. When your child is over the height OR weight limit of the infant-only seat, you can use an infant/child seat in the rear-facing position.
- Make sure the harness is snug, (only one finger should fit between the harness and the baby's collar bone). The chest clip should be positioned at armpit level.
- When tightening the vehicle seat belt, push the infant seat down and into the upholstery, and pull the belt as tight as possible. There should be very little movement.

**WARNING:** Never place a rear-facing child restraint in a seat equipped with an air bag.

### Forward-Facing Child Seat • 10 - 18 kg (22 - 40 lb.)

- When your child weighs 10 kg and can pull to a stand independently use a forward-facing seat. Before this, the neck and back muscles and bone structure are not strong enough to withstand crash forces.
- Make sure the harness is snug, so that only one finger can fit between the harness and the child's collar bones. The chest clip should be positioned at armpit level.
- When tightening the vehicle seat belt, kneel in the child restraint to push it down and into the upholstery, and pull the belt as tight as possible. There should be very little movement.
- All forward-facing child seats must be anchored to the vehicle frame with a tether strap. Check your vehicle owner's manual or your dealership for tether anchor locations.

**Booster Seat • 18 kg (40 lb.) or over**

- The child must weigh 18 kg before moving to a booster seat. If the mid-point of your child's ears is over the back of the child restraint but he/she is not yet 18 kg, use a combination child seat/booster.
- A booster seat raises the child to fit the adult seat-belt properly.
- A booster that uses a lap/shoulder belt provides the best protection for your child.
- Use a booster until your child is over the manufacturer's upper weight limit or height limit, or the mid-point of the ears is above the top of the high back booster or the vehicle seat.

**Seat-Belt • 1.45 m (4 ft. 9 in.), or 36 kg (80 lb.), or 8 years of age**

- When your child has outgrown the booster seat, start using the lap/shoulder belt on its own.
- The key to using a seat-belt safely is positioning. The lap belt should be worn low on the hips, touching the upper thighs, to prevent abdominal injuries or spinal damage. The shoulder belt should be worn over the shoulder and across the chest.
- The child should sit fully upright, with back against the vehicle seat. To prevent slouching, the legs should be long enough to bend over the front of the vehicle seat. This will prevent the lap belt from riding up over the abdomen. To fit most shoulder belts, the child should have a sitting height of at least 63 cm (25 in.)

Source: Canada Safety Council - [www.safety-council.org](http://www.safety-council.org)