

Using the correct car seat or booster seat can be a lifesaver: make sure your child is always buckled in an age- and size-appropriate car seat or booster seat.



REAR-FACING CAR SEAT

Birth up to Age 2*

Buckle children in a rear-facing seat until age 2 or when they reach the upper weight or height limit of that seat.



FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT

Age 2 up to at least age 5*

When children outgrow their rear-facing seat, they should be buckled in a forward-facing car seat until at least age 5 or when they reach the upper weight or height limit of that seat.



BOOSTER SEAT

Age 5 up until seat belts fit properly*

Once children outgrow their forward-facing seat, they should be buckled in a booster seat until seat belts fit properly. The recommended height for proper seat belt fit is 57 inches tall.



SEAT BELT

Once seat belts fit properly without a booster seat

Children no longer need to use a booster seat once seat belts fit them properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs (not the stomach) and the shoulder belt lays across the chest (not the neck).

Keep children ages 12 and under in the back seat. Never place a rear-facing car seat in front of an active air bag.

**Recommended age ranges for each seat type vary to account for differences in child growth and height/weight limits of car seats and booster seats. Use the car seat or booster seat owner's manual to check installation and the seat height/weight limits, and proper seat use.*

Child safety seat recommendations: American Academy of Pediatrics.
Graphic design: adapted from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

- To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible based on the manufacturer's height and weight limit. "Graduation" to the next level increases the risk of injury in a crash.
- All car seats have an expiration date. Generally, it is 6 years; but contact the manufacturer, or look for a stamp on the car seat to find out what the expiration date is for their car seat.
- Don't use any products in the car seat that didn't come from the manufacturer. Car seat fabrics meet strict fire safety codes. Add-on toys can injure your child in a crash.
- Check www.recalls.gov to see if a product, especially if it was used before, has been recalled.
- Sign up to receive e-mail recall notification at www.cpsc.gov. When you buy a new product like a car seat, mail in the registration card to receive important recall information.
- Follow all manufacturers' instructions when setting up, installing and using a product.
- Car seats are made for travel. Don't leave your baby for hours on end in the car seat outside of the car.
- Get your seat checked at CA Highway Patrol in Bishop, for info call 760-872-5960

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS:

- **Safe Kids coalitions:** provides free instructions on how to install your car seat correctly by currently certified child passenger safety technicians. To contact Safe Kids coalition, visit www.usa.safekids.org or call (202) 662-0600.
- Call **1-866-SEAT-CHECK** (1-866-732-8243) or visit www.seatcheck.org to find a nearby location for assistance relating to child passenger restraint system requirement, installation, and inspection
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) – Child Safety Seat Inspection Station Locator
<http://icsw.nhtsa.gov/cps/cpsfitting/>

CURRENT CALIFORNIA LAW:

- Children under 2 years of age shall ride in a rear-facing car seat unless the child weighs 40 or more pounds OR is 40 or more inches tall. The child shall be secured in a manner that complies with the height and weight limits specified by the manufacturer of the car seat. (California Vehicle Code Section 27360.)
- Children under the age of 8 must be secured in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat.
- Children who are 8 years of age OR have reached 4'9" in height may be secured by a booster seat, but at a minimum must be secured by a safety belt. (California Vehicle Code Section 27363.)