



Safe & Secure

Choosing the right car seat for your child



Car crashes are the number one cause of death for Canadian children!

A properly installed car seat can reduce the risk of serious injury or death by as much as 71 per cent.

Car seat clinics show that as many as 80 per cent of car seats are installed improperly. Common errors include not tightening the seatbelt and harness enough, and not properly using a tether strap when required.

Make sure your child is safe and secure, and is buckled up right. Children under 13 years of age are safest in the back seat away from all active air bags.

By law, drivers are responsible for ensuring passengers under 16 years of age are secured properly. Failing to do so may result in a \$90 fine, plus two demerit points and a victim surcharge.



The Ontario government's new legislation - effective September 1, 2005 - will require the use of booster seats for children who have outgrown a car seat but are too small for a regular seatbelt. See the page *Pre-school to 8-years-old* for information.

Infants

Newborn babies and infants require special protection while in a vehicle. In a collision, properly installed rear-facing car seats can save your child's life.

Infant car seats should face the back of the vehicle, rest on a 45-degree angle and move no more than 2.5 cm (1 in.) side-to-side. If necessary, use a towel or a foam bar (pool noodle) under the base of the child car seat to adjust the angle. Harness straps should be slotted at or below a baby's shoulders. You should not be able to fit more than one finger underneath the harness straps at the child's collarbone. The chest clip should be flat against the chest at armpit level.

When your child outgrows the maximum height and weight of his/her infant seat, you may require a convertible rear-facing seat until your child is ready to be facing forward. Use a rear-facing car seat until:

- the baby is at least 9 kilograms (20 lb.)
- the baby can pull him/herself to a standing position
- the baby is one year old.



Birth to 9 kg (20 lb.)



Rear-facing seat



Use away from an active airbag



Toddlers

Your child can ride facing forward when they are about a year old, over 9 kg (20 lb.), and can pull him/herself to a standing position.

All forward-facing car seats must use a tether strap. If your vehicle does not have a tether anchor in place, contact a dealership to have one installed.

To prevent the car seat from moving forward and causing injury in a collision, it is important to use the tether strap exactly as the manufacturer recommends.

To install a forward-facing car seat, fasten the tether strap, then use your body weight to tighten and fasten the seatbelt.

Ensure that the shoulder straps are at or above the child's shoulders. Straps should be snug, with only one finger width between the strap and the child's collarbone. Avoid using aftermarket car seat products. They can become projectiles or may have hard or sharp surfaces that can hurt your child in a collision.



9 to 18 kg (20-40 lb.)



Forward-facing seat



Use with a tether strap



Pre-school to 8-years-old

A new law, expected to come into effect on September 1, 2005, will require booster seats for children who have outgrown a car seat but are too small for a regular seatbelt.

Booster seats are to be used by children from 18 to 36 kg (40-80 lb.), less than 145 centimetres (4' 9") tall and up to 8 years old.

Seatbelts are designed to protect adults. Booster seats raise a child up so that the adult seatbelt works more effectively. Booster seats protect against serious injury 3½ times better than seatbelts alone.

A lap and shoulder combination belt must be used for both the high-back and low-back booster seat. If your vehicle only has lap belts in the rear seat, contact your local dealer regarding retrofitting it with a shoulder belt. Never use a lap belt alone with a booster seat that's designed to be used with a lap-shoulder combination belt. Your child's head must be supported by the top of the booster or the vehicle seat. The shoulder strap must cross between your child's shoulder and neck (not the face), and the lap belt must cross low over the hips (not the stomach). Never use seatbelt adjusters.



Between 18 and 36 kg (40–80 lb.)



Booster seat



Use with lap and shoulder belt



Youth

Seatbelts are designed for adults and older, larger children. Once your child can sit all the way against the vehicle seat-back with legs bent comfortably over the edge of the seat, and with the shoulder belt flat across the shoulder and chest, he or she is ready to move from the booster seat to the vehicle seatbelt.

Make sure the shoulder strap crosses between your child's shoulder and neck (not the face), and the lap belt crosses over the hips (not the stomach).

Children 13 years of age and under are safest in the back seat. Never put two children in the same seatbelt or place the shoulder strap behind the child's back.

Use a seatbelt for every trip and teach your child to wear a seatbelt by always wearing one yourself!



Over 36 kg (80 lb.), 145 cm (4' 9") tall or 8 years old



Vehicle seatbelt or booster seat





Important tips to keep your child safe and secure...

- ✓ Use the right seat for your child's weight and development.
- ✓ Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for correct car seat installation and use.
- ✓ Be sure to secure your child correctly. Make sure harness straps are snug and tight. Use a tether strap with a forward-facing car seat. Keep children away from active air bags. Children 13 years of age and under are safest in the back seat.
- ✓ Use caution when buying or using a pre-owned child car seat. Buy new, or from someone you know, and check it carefully. Make sure the car seat has:
 - instructions and all necessary hardware
 - not been in a collision
 - a Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (**CMVSS**) sticker
 - not expired or is not older than 10 years
 - no discoloured (stress) marks or cracks and the harness is not worn or torn



For more information about child car seat safety contact:

Ministry of Transportation

Web: www.mto.gov.on.ca/safety

MTOINFO

1-800-268-4686

Your local public health unit

Additional information on child car seat safety
and car seat recalls is available from:

Transport Canada

1-800-333-0371

Web: www.tc.gc.ca