

Car Seats—The Right Way!

Before you look for a new car seat—check the vehicle owner’s manual under ‘child safety’ so you know how and where a car seat can fit in your vehicle.

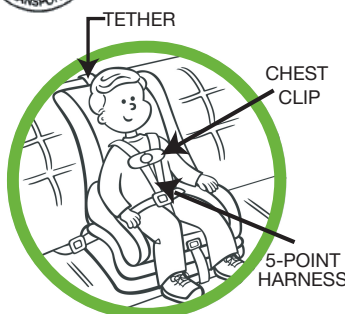


Start shopping!

Use this list to help you choose the right seat for you, your child and your vehicle.

Check for these things in the store:

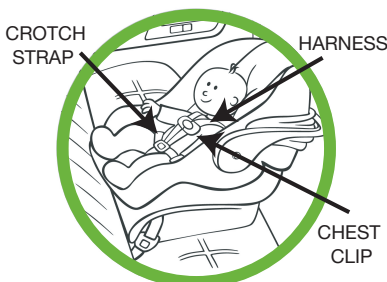
- ☐ a car seat that meets the needs of your child—height, weight, rear/forward-facing
- ☐ a CMVSS safety standards sticker
- ☐ date of manufacture—make sure it is recent
- ☐ manufacturer’s instructions and warranty card
- ☐ 5-point harness (includes harness straps that go over thighs)
- ☐ a harness that is easy to tighten and loosen
- ☐ several harness slot positions so they can be adjusted for your growing child
- ☐ harness slot positions that are easy to change
- ☐ harness webbing that does not twist easily



For infant only rear-facing seats

(recommended for newborns—it is portable and provides the best fit)

- ☐ at least 2 positions for the crotch strap
- ☐ carrying handle is easy to use



For forward-facing seats

- ☐ a tether strap that is easy to tighten

TIP

Not all seats will fit all vehicles.

When you purchase the seat, make sure you can return it.

Try before you buy!

Read the car seat manufacturer’s instructions.

Check these things in the vehicle:

- ☐ 80% of the base of the car seat rests on the vehicle seat
- ☐ seat belt can be threaded through the car seat easily
- ☐ seat belt can be tightened to secure the car seat in the vehicle
- ☐ Universal Anchorage System (UAS) is easy to use and tighten (car seats/vehicles manufactured since 2002)

For rear-facing seats

- ☐ the car seat can be reclined to a 45° angle
- ☐ with the car seat in place, there is enough room for the driver and front seat passenger (at least 25 cm from airbag)

For forward-facing seats

- ☐ tether strap attaches to the anchor behind the car seat

TIP

3-in-1 car seats (can be used as rear-forward-booster seats) may **not** be the best buy:

- many vehicles do not have enough room for these seats when rear facing
- although they are for use up to booster age, the expiry date may occur before the child reaches that size
- these seat backs are shorter than high-back boosters
- the best choice may be to buy an infant-only seat and then a convertible seat that can be used rear and forward facing.

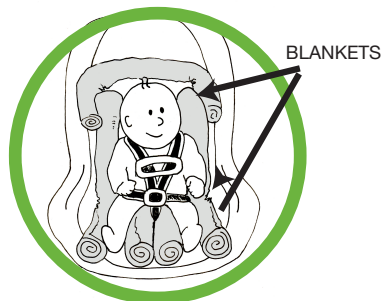
You know you've done it right

Put it all together!

You can use your car seat safely by following the vehicle owner's manual and the instructions for your car seat!

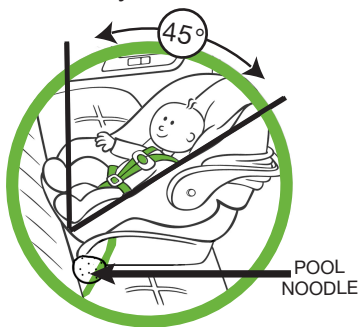
Your child is buckled up in the car seat right when:

- ☐ the chest clip is at armpit level
- ☐ shoulder straps should be snug; you should NOT be able to pinch harness straps together at your child's shoulder
- ☐ shoulder straps come from the back of the car seat through the correct slot
- ☐ harness straps lie flat
- ☐ no extra clothing, blankets or anything else under or behind, so the harness stays snug
- ☐ rolled receiving blankets are supporting sides of newborn's head and body to keep proper position (helps with breathing and swallowing)



Your car seat is installed in your vehicle right when:

- ☐ holding it where the seat belt or UAS goes, you cannot move it more than 1" from side to side or front to back
- ☐ if using the seat belt, you have locked the seat belt system to hold the car seat tight (see vehicle owner's manual)
- ☐ it is adjusted to the proper recline
 - rear-facing to 45°—may require the addition of a pool noodle
 - forward-facing—check instructions
- ☐ tether strap (for forward-facing) is anchored and tight
- ☐ carrying handle (for rear facing infant seat) is in the correct position according to the car seat instructions.
- ☐ there is nothing loose in the vehicle that could become a projectile in a crash



If you still have questions...

- Ontario Ministry of Transportation, www.mto.gov.on.ca, click on road safety/seat belts.
- Transport Canada, www.tc.gc.ca/road_safety, click on safe drivers and passengers, then child safety.
- Call your car seat manufacturer—contact information is on the warranty card or car seat.
- For information and how-to videos, visit www.smdhu.org or call the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520.
- Parachute, www.parachutecanada.org in injury topics section under car seats. Great videos to help install car seats.

Check that it's *done right* before every trip to...

Make
Every
Ride
a Safe
Ride!

