

Seat Belt

A lap/shoulder seat belt protects a child who fits the adult seat belt correctly (see 5-Step Test).

Most children are at least 4'9" (145 cm) tall before they can safely use the adult seat belt.

5-Step Test

When buckled with a lap/shoulder belt:

1. Back: against the vehicle seat, no slouching



2. Knees: bent comfortably over the edge of the seat



3. Lap belt: low on the child's hips, touching the thighs, never on the belly



4. Shoulder belt: touching the chest and crossing between the child's neck and shoulder



5. Stay seated: able to hold this position the entire ride



A child may pass all 5 steps to use a seat belt in one car but still need to use a booster seat in another vehicle.

Make sure your child has support behind the head to the tops of their ears.

Your child is safest in the back seat until they are 13 years old.

General

Always read and follow the directions for your car seat or booster seat. If you no longer have the manual, contact the manufacturer for a copy.

Check the car seat, seat belt, and airbag sections of your vehicle manual.

Is your seat safe to use?

Check that your seat is approved for use in Canada.

Look for the National Safety Mark (circle with a maple leaf) on your seat.

- After a collision: A seat involved in a crash may no longer be safe to use.
- Seat history: If you do not know the history of the seat, it may not be safe to use.
- Expiry: Check the expiration date of your seat. Contact the manufacturer if you are unsure.
- Recall: Check Transport Canada's website to find out if your seat has been recalled.

CAR SEAT INSTALLATION

Check that you're using the correct belt path for rear or forward facing.

UAS (lower anchors)

- Location: Check your vehicle manual to find out where you can use the lower anchors in your vehicle. The lower anchors often cannot be used in the centre.
- Weight: Check your vehicle manual and your car seat manual to find out what the weight limit is for installing with lower anchors.

Seat belt:

The seat belt must lock in some way. Check in your vehicle manual and car seat manual for directions. Some seats have built-in lock-offs for use with the seat belt.

OTHER

- Cleaning: Check your car seat manual for washing instructions; do not soak the harness.
- Winter clothing: Use thin, warm layers (like fleece) and cover with blankets after buckling. Bulky clothing can affect your child's safety.
- Projectiles: Loose objects can move around in a crash. Secure any loose items.
- All passengers and pets should be buckled or secured.
- Contact the manufacturer with questions or for support.
- Contact a local Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) for a seat check: <http://www.cpsac.org/findatech/>



CHILD PASSENGER
SAFETY ASSOCIATION
OF CANADA



L'ASSOCIATION POUR
LA SÉCURITÉ DES ENFANTS
PASSAGERS DU CANADA

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

The Child Passenger Safety Association of Canada (CPSAC) is a national, not-for-profit corporation. Our mission is to provide Canadians with the skills and knowledge to safely transport children.

CPSAC provides training for those who work in health care, injury prevention, emergency response, law enforcement, family resource, social work, childcare, retail, as well as for parents, caregivers, and those with an interest in child passenger safety. Members promote child passenger safety through education, advocacy, and training.

Motor vehicle collisions are the leading cause of death from unintentional injury of children, and correctly choosing, installing, and using a car seat or booster seat provides the best protection for your child in the car.

This brochure is not intended to replace a car seat, booster seat, or vehicle manual, and focuses on best practice. Consult provincial or territorial law for specifics for your area.

The best car seat is the one that fits your child, your budget, and your vehicle, and that you will use properly every time.

For local assistance, contact:

www.cpsac.org/find-a-tech

www.cpsac.org

FIND US ON:



Rear-Facing Seat

Use a rear-facing only seat or a convertible seat.

Children are safest using a rear-facing seat for as long as they are within the limits of the seat.

Harness

- At or below shoulder level
- Tight: cannot pinch a horizontal fold at the collarbone
- Chest clip at armpit level
- No unregulated products (head positioners, bunting bags, harness covers, etc); these can affect your child's safety.



Seat

- Never install a rear-facing seat in front of an active airbag.
- Always follow the recline angle indicator for your seat; recline fully for a newborn.
- Install with either UAS or seat belt
- 1" (2.5 cm) or less of movement at the belt path
- Check your manual to see how much overhang of the car seat is allowed.
- For a rear-facing only seat, check where the handle must be.



Child Fit

- It is safe for the child's legs to touch the back of the seat.
- The seat is outgrown when the child reaches the height, weight, or fit limits for the seat.
- Many rear-facing seats are outgrown when the top of the child's head is 1" below the top of the car seat.

Forward-Facing Seat



Use a forward-facing seat with a harness: a convertible or combination seat.

A forward-facing seat protects a child who has outgrown their rear-facing convertible seat.

Keep your child in a 5-point harness until they weigh at least 40 lbs (18 kg) and have the maturity to sit correctly in a booster.

Harness

- At or above shoulder level
- Tight: cannot pinch a horizontal fold at the collarbone
- Chest clip at armpit level

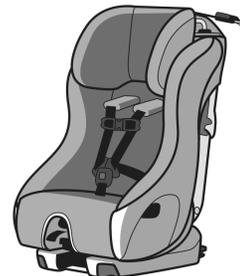
Seat

- Install with either UAS or seat belt
- 1" (2.5 cm) or less of movement at the belt path
- Check your manual to see how much overhang of the car seat is allowed.
- Always attach the top tether to an approved anchor point in the vehicle.



Child Fit

- The seat is outgrown when the child reaches the height, weight, or fit limits for the seat.
- Many forward-facing seats are outgrown when the harness straps are no longer at or above the child's shoulders.
- If your child has outgrown their seat by height or weight but is not yet ready for a booster seat, you will need a seat with a harness that will support a taller, heavier child.



Booster Seat

Use a high-back booster seat or a backless booster seat together with a lap and shoulder seat belt.

A booster seat protects a child who is at least 40 lbs (18 kg) and has the maturity to sit correctly in a booster seat.

Keep your child in a booster seat until they fit correctly in the adult seat belt (see 5-Step Test).

Belt Fit

- Lap belt: low on the child's hips, touching the thighs, never on the belly
- Shoulder belt: touching the chest and crossing between the child's neck and shoulder
- A booster seat must always be used with a lap/shoulder belt and never with a lap-only belt.
- If the shoulder belt does not cross between the child's neck and shoulder, use a booster seat that has a shoulder belt guide.



Seat

- The child must have head support to the tops of the ears, either from the vehicle head rest or from a high-back booster, or both.
- Check your manual to see how much overhang of the booster seat is allowed.
- Check your manual to see how much of a gap there can be behind the booster seat.
- Check that the lap/shoulder belt is routed correctly.



Child Fit

- A high-back booster seat can provide better belt fit, comfort, and support than a backless booster seat.
- In order to use a booster seat safely the child must be correctly positioned at all times, even when sleeping.
- The seat is outgrown when the child reaches the height, weight, or fit limits for the seat.