



Tips for Car Seat Safety for Children 1 to 3 Years Old

Because car seats save lives, all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico require their use. Even so, car crashes continue to be the leading cause of death for children ages 1 through 12.

For a car seat to do its job, it has to be the right one for a child's age and size. Car seats must be installed and used properly to provide adequate protection, and they must be adjusted to fit the child securely. Your child needs the right seat at the right time, used in the right way.

Children between 1 and 3 years old should be kept in rear-facing car seats as long as possible. It's the best way to keep them safe. They should remain in rear-facing car seats until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car seat's manufacturer.

- Select a car seat based on your child's age and size, choose a seat that fits in your vehicle, and use it every time.
- Fasten the seat in the backseat of your car with the seat belt or LATCH, a special system for making proper car seat installation easier.
- If you're using the seat belt to fasten the seat, feed the belt through the correct belt paths on the seat. Check the directions to make sure you're doing it right.





- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions; read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or LATCH system; and check height and weight limits.
- Never use a car seat that faces backwards in front of an active air bag.
- To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- If you need help using your car seat, visit a car seat inspection station. To locate one in your area, visit www.nhtsa.gov.

After your child's first birthday, periodically check your car seat's weight and height limits.

Because seats that face backwards are safest, don't be in a hurry to switch them to a forward-facing car seat, a car seat designed to face forward.

Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, he or she is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness.

Stay in the Know - Get Automatic Recall Information

Right after you install your seat, write your name and address on the postage-paid card that comes with the car seat and send it in. If the seat is found to have a possible safety problem and has to be recalled, the maker of the seat will let you know that the seat cannot be used or provide other instructions. You can also register your car seat online at www.nhtsa.gov/parents.

 facebook.com/childpassengersafety

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www.nhtsa.gov/parents