CAR SEAT SAFETY



maimonides
Children's Hospital

Installation



- Read the car seat and vehicle owners manuals
- Car seats can be installed using the seat belt or the LATCH system (*do not use both)*
- The car seat should not move more than 1 inch in any direction after installation (test at the belt path)
- If the car seat is rear-facing, check to make sure it is reclined at the correct angle
- If the car seat is forward-facing, be sure to attach the top teather strap to decrease forward head movement
- Car seats should be used in the back seat of the car
- Remove any item that can become a projectile during a crash
  - *Hard items (including toys) can be harmful in a quick stop or crash*

Harnessing & Fit



- Harness straps should be flat and not twisted
- Straps should be tight enough that you cannot pinch any extra material over the shoulders
  - *Rear-facing: At or below shoulders*
  - *Forward-facing: At or slightly above shoulders*
- The chest clip should be at armpit level
- Know the height and weight limits of the seat
- Do not use products that did not come with your seat
- Bulky coats and blankets add too much harness slack and should be placed over top of the straps

DID YOU KNOW?

9 out of **10** car seats
are **not** properly installed

Call 311 today to have your car seat installation checked by an expert!
Ask when the next car seat event is.

Infants & Toddlers
☛ REAR-FACING

- Children should be seated rear-facing until they are at least 2 years of age, facing the back of the vehicle seat
- Harness straps should be flat and snug at or below the child's shoulders
- Check that you are using the belt path closest to the vehicle seat *(some seats have more than one)*
- Ensure that the seat is at the proper recline for the child's size
- Rear-facing seats could be infant carriers, convertible seats, or 3-in-1 seats
- Never place a rear-facing seat in the front seat of a car
- Rolled receiving blankets can be placed on the sides of newborns for extra support





Toddlers & Preschoolers
☛ FORWARD-FACING

- Once children have outgrown the rear-facing height or weight limit, the car seat can be turned forward-facing
- Harness straps should be flat and snug at or slightly above the child's shoulders
- Use the top tether of the LATCH system to help to decrease forward head motion, making it safer for the child's neck and spinal cord
- If using the lower anchors of the LATCH system, make sure you know the maximum weight limit
- Crotch buckle can be moved forward to allow for more room for older children

School-Aged Children
☛ BOOSTER

- Once children have outgrown the height or weight limit of their harness, they can be moved to a booster seat
- Boosters help boost children up so the vehicle seat belt fits them properly
- High-back boosters give more upper body protection and shoulder belt adjustment
- The seatbelt should fit snug across the chest and upper thighs/hip bones
- You must use a lap and shoulder belt system with boosters
  Lap-only belts do not provide upper body protection





Older Children
☛ SEAT BELT

Once children reach the height or weight limits of their booster seats, they are usually ready to move from a booster to a seat belt.

To check seat belt fit follow these 5 steps:

1. Children should sit up straight with their backs against the seat
2. Knees should bend comfortably over the edge of the seat with feet touching the floor
3. Lap belt should fit low and snug across the upper thighs/hip bones, not the stomach
4. Shoulder belt should be snug across the chest, not hitting the neck
5. Children should be able to sit still the entire trip

If a child does not pass the 5-step test, they should continue to ride in a booster seat

For questions, contact our Injury Prevention Team at:

718.283.2828

injuryprevention@maimonidesmed.org

or visit www.NHTSA.gov

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Trauma Injury Prevention/ Education Outreach