



Convertible

Convertible car seats, also called Infant/Child seats, can be used both rear- and forward-facing. Rear-facing, they accommodate children weighing up to 13.6-20 kg (30-45 lb.), depending on the model. Forward-facing, these seats can be used up to 18-30 kg (40-65 lb.), depending on the model.



3-Stage seat

3-Stage seats, also called Infant/Child/Boosters, can be used rear- and forward-facing, the same as Convertible seats. They can also be used as a Booster seat from 18 to 36-45 kg (40 to 100-120 lb.).

It is *safer* for a child to stay rear-facing as long as possible. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children remain rear-facing until age 2 or more, **or** until they reach the car seat's maximum rear-facing weight **or** until the top of the child's head is within 2.5 cm (1 in.) of the top of the seat.

Using a car seat involves two main steps:

- ☺ harnessing your child in the seat correctly
- ☺ putting the seat in your vehicle correctly

Always follow the instructions for *your* seat and *your* vehicle.

Harnessing Your Child in the Seat

Always check the seat's metal and plastic parts before putting your child in the car seat. In warm weather, they can get very hot. Your child's bottom and back should be flat against the car seat back.



Rear-facing

When **rear-facing**, the harness straps must come through the back of the seat at the level of, or slightly *below*, your child's shoulders. If the harness in a Convertible or 3-Stage seat is above the infant's shoulders when it is in the lowest position, the seat should not be used. An Infant-only car seat should be used until the baby is taller. When **forward-facing**, the harness must be level with, or just *above* your child's shoulders.

The harness straps must lie flat across your child's body. Any twists or folds will concentrate crash forces. The harness straps should be snug. Adjusted properly, you can get no more than one finger between the harness and your child's chest or be unable to pinch a fold in the strap.



Car seats come with a chest clip to keep the harness straps from falling off the shoulders. It should be level with your child's arm pit.

Putting the Seat in Your Vehicle



The back seat is a safer place for a child. The centre, back position is preferred, because it is furthest away from the point-of-impact from any direction. A car seat can only be used on a vehicle seat that faces the front.

A car seat must **not** be installed in a front seat that has an active **air bag**. All children under 13 years are safer in a back seat. For side-impact air bags, follow the vehicle manufacturer's instructions.



When using the seat **rear-facing**, check *your* manufacturer's instructions to be sure that you have it reclined properly. When **forward-facing**, the seat should be in the fully upright position, unless *your* instructions say that the seat can be reclined.



Forward-facing

With a Convertible or 3-Stage car seat, there will be two belt paths: one for use when the seat is rear-facing and one for use when it is forward-facing. Follow *your* car seat's instructions for where the belt should go.

Rear-facing

Check *your* vehicle owner's manual for information on using your seat belts or Universal Anchorage System (UAS) to secure a Convertible or 3-Stage car seat. It will have information on the type of seat belts in the vehicle and where the UAS anchors are located.



When tightening the belt, push the car seat down and into the vehicle upholstery. The seat should not move more than 2.5 cm (1 in.) toward the front of the vehicle, or directly side-to-side where the belt is attached. Rear-facing, it is acceptable (and normal) to be able to lift the seat toward the rear of the car or pivot it side-to-side.

The Tether Strap



Once the seat is turned **forward-facing**, it must also be anchored with a tether strap. The tether strap is attached to the back of the car seat and is fastened to an anchor in the vehicle. It limits how far forward the car seat will come in a sudden stop or crash. If a tether strap is not used, the child's head can come dangerously forward.

All passenger vehicles manufactured after September 1, 1999, and light trucks and multi-purpose vehicles manufactured after September 1, 2000, come from the factory with user-ready tether anchors built-in. Tether anchor locations will vary from one model of vehicle to another. Check *your* vehicle owner's manual or with your dealership for these locations.

When tightening the tether strap, ensure that it compresses the vehicle seat back or fixed headrest, if there is one present. If your vehicle has an adjustable headrest, the tether is usually threaded under it. Check *your* vehicle owner's manual. The tether strap must be tight. Pull forward on the top of the car seat to check the tightness of the tether. The seat should not move forward more than 2.5 cm (1 in.).

Time to move to a Booster? Your child has outgrown a forward-facing car seat when he is above the upper height or weight limit given in *your* instructions. If he is 18 kg (40 lb.), he can move to a booster seat. It is safer, however, for a child to use a 5 pt. harness as long as possible. Most newer models of car seats allow a child to be harnessed up to 30 kg (65 lb.).

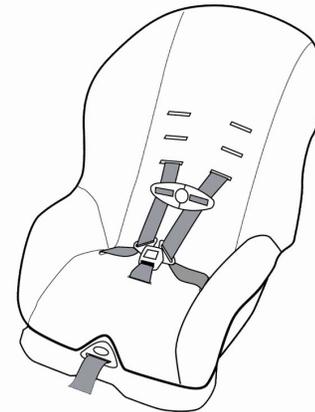
If the top of your child's ears is above the back of the car seat or the harness comes from below the shoulders, then he must come out of it, regardless of his weight. If he is not yet 18 kg, then a Child/Booster seat, appropriate for his height, should be used.

A Child/Booster seat is both a forward-facing car seat and high back booster. It is used with the harness as a car seat until the child weighs 18 to 30 kg (40 to 65 lb.), depending on the model. Then, it can be converted to a booster, using the vehicle's lap & shoulder belt.

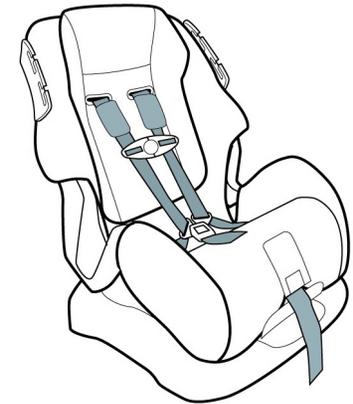


Infant & Toddler Safety Association

Multi-Stage Seats



**Convertible Seat
(Infant/Child)**



**3-Stage Seat
(Infant/Child/Booster)**



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For more information, go to our website: www.infantandtoddlersafety.ca