

# Know before you go!

Child Safety Seat Guidelines



what's holding you back?

# Know which seat and how to use it!

## Infant



## Convertible



## Forward-facing



## Boosters

( High and Low back )



## Lap/Shoulder Belts



**UNDER ONE YEAR OLD AND UNDER 20 POUNDS**

Infant seats with and without removable bases must face rearward only, and recline at a 45° angle.

- Harness straps at or below the shoulder level and fit snugly.
- Keep the harness straps positioned properly by aligning the retainer/chest clip with the infant's armpit.
- If an infant weighs more than 20 pounds, but is still younger than one year, use a rear-facing seat rated for heavier infants.
- If an infant's head is less than 1" below the top of the child seat, move the infant to a convertible seat.

**REAR-FACING POSITION SUPPORTS ENTIRE HEAD, NECK AND BACK:**

A rear-facing infant seat cradles and moves with a child, reducing stress to neck and spinal cord which may occur in event of a crash.

**UNDER ONE YEAR OLD**

**REAR-FACING**

- Child seat should recline at a 45° angle.
- Harness straps at or below shoulder level.
- Retainer/chest clip at child's armpit level.

**OVER ONE YEAR OLD**

**FORWARD-FACING**

Children over one year old and weighing over 20 pounds may ride forward facing in a convertible seat.

- Harness straps at or above child's shoulder level.
- Retainer/chest clip at child's armpit level.

**EXCEPTION:**

If the child is over one year old but weighs **less** than 20 pounds, place the child in a rear-facing seat.

**OVER ONE YEAR AND OVER 20 POUNDS**

Children must be older than one year and over 20 pounds before they may ride in a forward-facing seat.

- Children should ride in a safety seat with full harness until they weigh about 40 pounds.
- Harness straps should be at or above shoulder level.
- Harness straps should be snug and should lie in a relatively straight line without sagging.
- Keep the harness straps positioned properly over the shoulders by aligning the retainer/chest clip with the child's armpit.

**BETWEEN 40-80 POUNDS AND UNDER 4'9"**

Children between 40-80 pounds should ride in the back seat in a belt-positioning booster seat, which uses the adult lap and shoulder belt.

- Booster seats should be used until the adult lap and shoulder belt fit children properly.
- Belt-positioning boosters can only be used with both the lap and shoulder belt across the child.
- The shoulder belt should be snug against the child's chest, resting across the collarbone.
- The lap belt should lay low across the child's upper thigh area.

**HIGH BACK BOOSTER:**

High-back, belt-positioning booster provides head restraint in vehicle back seats with low backs or no head restraint. Must be used with a lap and shoulder belt.

**8 YEARS OLD OR 4'9"**

Children are not ready for lap/shoulder belts alone until they can sit with their backs against the vehicle seat back cushion with knees bent over the seat cushion edge (approximate height is 4' 9").



what's holding you back?

# Quick-Reference Safety-Seat Chart

	INFANTS	TODDLER	YOUNG CHILDREN
WEIGHT	Birth to 1 year, up to 20 lbs.	Over 1 year and over 20 lbs.	40-80 lbs., unless 4'9"
TYPE OF SEAT	Infant only or convertible	Convertible / Forward-facing	Belt positioning booster seat
SEAT POSITION	Rear-facing only	Forward-facing	Forward-facing
MAKE SURE:	Harness straps at or below shoulder level. Retainer / chest clip at armpit level.	Harness straps at or above shoulder level. Most seats require top slot for forward-facing. Retainer / chest clip at armpit level.	Belt positioning booster seats must be used with both lap and shoulder belt. Make sure the lap belt fits low and tight across the lap / upper thigh area and the shoulder belt fits snug crossing the chest and shoulder to avoid abdominal injuries.

**WARNING!**

All children age 12 and under should ride in the back seat



Together, the lower anchors and upper tethers make up the LATCH system.

## LATCH

Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH). It's a system designed to make installation of child safety seats easier by requiring child safety seats to be installed without using the vehicle's seat belt system.

Since September of 1999, all new forward facing child safety seats (not including booster seats) have to meet stricter head protection requirements, which call for a top tether strap (an adjustable strap attached to the back of a child safety seat). It has a hook for securing the seat to a tether anchor found either on the rear shelf area of the vehicle or, in the case of mini-vans and station wagons, on the rear floor or on the back of the rear seat of the vehicle.

As of September 2000, all new cars, minivans, and light trucks have been manufactured with this tether anchor.

As of September, 2002, two rear seating positions of all cars, minivans and light trucks will come equipped with lower child safety seat anchorage points located between a vehicle's seat cushion and seat back. Also, all child safety seats have had two attachments which connect to the vehicle's lower anchorage attachment points.

Together, the lower anchors and the upper tethers make up the LATCH system.

# Child Safety Seat Checklist

Did you know four out of five child car safety seats are used incorrectly? Proper use of your child's safety seat can mean the difference between life and death. Tragedy can be avoided by simply following a few simple rules about child safety and restraint.

## BASIC RULES

- Children age 12 and under should ride in the back seat.
- Never place a rear-facing child safety seat in front of an active air bag.

## FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS

- Carefully read and follow the installation instruction manual for all child safety seats.
- Consult your vehicle owner's manual for seat belt and child seat installation.



what's holding you back?

**OHSSO**

Oklahoma Highway Safety Office

## OKLAHOMA HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE

3223 North Lincoln

Oklahoma City, OK 73105-5403

[www.dps.state.ok.us/ohso](http://www.dps.state.ok.us/ohso)

PHONE: (405)523-1570

This publication, printed by Western Printing, is issued by the Department of Public Safety as authorized by the Commissioner of Public Safety. 100,000 copies have been prepared and distributed at a cost of \$7,166. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearing House of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. (04/07)

# Know which seat and how to use it!

## Infant



## Convertible



## Forward-facing



## Boosters

( High and Low back )



## Lap/Shoulder Belts



**UNDER ONE YEAR OLD AND UNDER 20 POUNDS**

Infant seats with and without removable bases must face rearward only, and recline at a 45° angle.

- Harness straps at or below the shoulder level and fit snugly.
- Keep the harness straps positioned properly by aligning the retainer/chest clip with the infant's armpit.
- If an infant weighs more than 20 pounds, but is still younger than one year, use a rear-facing seat rated for heavier infants.
- If an infant's head is less than 1" below the top of the child seat, move the infant to a convertible seat.

**REAR-FACING POSITION SUPPORTS ENTIRE HEAD, NECK AND BACK:**

A rear-facing infant seat cradles and moves with a child, reducing stress to neck and spinal cord which may occur in event of a crash.

**UNDER ONE YEAR OLD**

**REAR-FACING**

- Child seat should recline at a 45° angle.
- Harness straps at or below shoulder level.
- Retainer/chest clip at child's armpit level.

**OVER ONE YEAR OLD**

**FORWARD-FACING**

Children over one year old and weighing over 20 pounds may ride forward facing in a convertible seat.

- Harness straps at or above child's shoulder level.
- Retainer/chest clip at child's armpit level.

**EXCEPTION:**

If the child is over one year old but weighs **less** than 20 pounds, place the child in a rear-facing seat.

**OVER ONE YEAR AND OVER 20 POUNDS**

Children must be older than one year and over 20 pounds before they may ride in a forward-facing seat.

- Children should ride in a safety seat with full harness until they weigh about 40 pounds.
- Harness straps should be at or above shoulder level.
- Harness straps should be snug and should lie in a relatively straight line without sagging.
- Keep the harness straps positioned properly over the shoulders by aligning the retainer/chest clip with the child's armpit.

**BETWEEN 40-80 POUNDS AND UNDER 4'9"**

Children between 40-80 pounds should ride in the back seat in a belt-positioning booster seat, which uses the adult lap and shoulder belt.

- Booster seats should be used until the adult lap and shoulder belt fit children properly.
- Belt-positioning boosters can only be used with both the lap and shoulder belt across the child.
- The shoulder belt should be snug against the child's chest, resting across the collarbone.
- The lap belt should lay low across the child's upper thigh area.

**HIGH BACK BOOSTER:**

High-back, belt-positioning booster provides head restraint in vehicle back seats with low backs or no head restraint. Must be used with a lap and shoulder belt.

**8 YEARS OLD OR 4'9"**

Children are not ready for lap/shoulder belts alone until they can sit with their backs against the vehicle seat back cushion with knees bent over the seat cushion edge (approximate height is 4' 9").



what's holding you back?