



# CAR SEAT SAFETY TIPS

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, car crashes are a leading cause of death for children ages one to 13. When used correctly, car seats and booster seats provide protection for children in a crash. Choosing and using the right car seat correctly, every time your child is in the car, will help keep your child safe. RCPD wants to offer these tips to help you choose the right seat and install it correctly.

## FIND THE RIGHT CAR SEAT

- **Use a car seat that fits your child's current size and age.** As children grow, how they sit in your car will change.
- **Make sure the car seat is the right fit for your vehicle** before you buy it, and test the car seat if possible. Not all car seats fit in all vehicles.
- **Choose a car seat that you can install and use correctly every time.**
- **There are four types of car seats for your child:**
  - **Rear-facing car seat (birth - 3 years):** Your child under age one should always ride in a rear-facing car seat, and keep your child rear-facing as long as possible. Your child should remain in this car seat until reaching the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer.
  - **Forward-facing car seat (1 - 7 years):** Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether. Your child should remain in this car seat until reaching the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer.
  - **Booster seat (4 - 12 years):** Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat, it's time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat. Your child should remain in a booster seat until big enough to fit in a seat belt properly.
  - **Seat belt (8 - 12 years):** For a seat belt to fit properly, the lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs, not the stomach. The shoulder belt should lie snugly across the shoulder and chest, and not cross the neck or face. Remember that your child should still ride in the back seat because it's safer there.

## INSTALL YOUR CAR SEAT CORRECTLY

**It is important to get your car seat inspected and registered.** If you've just installed or need help installing a car seat, you can receive assistance from an inspection station near you. Visit [NHTSA.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats#installation-help-car-seat-installation-instructions) to find a technician near you (<https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats#installation-help-car-seat-installation-instructions>).

## KEEP YOUR CHILD SAFE IN A CAR SEAT

Once your car seat is chosen and correctly installed, **register your car seat with the manufacturer to receive recalls and safety notices about the car seat** so your child can remain safe.

More Safety Tips



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