

# SEAT BELTS

Older children (over eight years or over 4'9") and adults should ride restrained by both lap and shoulder belts. The decision to move a child from a booster seat to a seat belt should be based on the fit of the seat belt on the child. Children need to be in a booster seat until they are at least eight years old, unless over 4'9" tall.

- Never allow passengers to ride unrestrained.
- Both the lap and shoulder belts must be used.
- The seat belt should fit low across the upper thighs and lower hips and across the center of the shoulder.
- Never allow children to place the shoulder belt behind their back or under their arm.
- The child's knees should bend comfortably over the edge of the seat when the child is sitting with their back against the seat.
- Children must be able to sit with the seat belt fitting properly for the complete trip.
- The safest place for ALL children is in the back seat.
- If you need additional information, call 1-866-CAR-SEAT (227-7328).

Important Message: Vehicle seats vary in size. The fit of a seat belt may vary from vehicle to vehicle.

Ohio law now requires all children 4-15 years of age to be properly restrained in a child restraint system or seat belt.

**BUCKLE UP!**



what's holding you back?



Courtesy of the  
Ohio Department of Public Safety  
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(614) 466-4775  
and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration



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Important information on  
Ohio's requirements for  
child restraints.

REAR-FACING SEATS  
FORWARD-FACING SEATS  
BOOSTER SEATS  
SEAT BELTS



# REAR-FACING SEATS

Infants should ride rear-facing in an infant-only or convertible seat until they are at least one year old and at least 20 pounds, preferably to the upper weight limit of the seat.

- **NEVER** place a rear-facing safety seat in a front seat with an active air bag.
- Rear-facing seats should be reclined no more than 45 degrees for a newborn. The older the children get, the more upright they should sit.
- Harness straps should be at or below the child's shoulders and should lay flat and snug on the child.
- The harness retainer clip should be at the child's armpit level.
- Some seats are designed for rear-facing use only; others can be turned forward-facing when appropriate for the child.
- Always use the car's seat belt or the lower anchors and tethers (LATCH) to hold the safety seat secure. The seat should move no more than one inch side-to-side or forward.

# FORWARD-FACING SEATS

Children over 20 pounds and at least one year of age may ride forward-facing in a convertible or forward-facing only seat until they are at least 40 pounds. NOTE: Some forward-facing child restraints with internal harnesses have higher weight limits.

- If the safety seat has a tray shield, adjust the tray shield as close to the child as possible.
- Most forward-facing seats with harnesses are designed for children between 20 and 40 pounds, although some have higher weight limits.
- Some seats convert from rear-facing to forward-facing, others are forward-facing only.
- Many forward-facing only car seats can be used as booster seats when children are over 40 pounds.
- Many seats require the use of the top harness slots when used forward-facing.
- Harness straps should be at or above the child's shoulders when using forward-facing seats.
- Harness straps should lay flat and snug on the child.
- The harness retainer clip should be at the child's armpit level.
- Children are best protected in a harness until they reach the upper weight limit allowed for the use of the harness.
- Always use the car's seat belt or the lower anchors and tethers for children (LATCH) to hold the safety seat secure. The seat should move no more than one inch side-to-side or forward.

# BOOSTER SEATS

The use of booster seats falls within Ohio's law, which requires children under four years old and/or under 40 pounds to be restrained in a safety seat. When children under four have outgrown a safety seat with an internal harness (usually 40 pounds), they must be placed in a belt positioning booster seat, preferably high-back, to meet Ohio's child passenger safety law.

- Children should be in a booster seat until they are at least 8 years old, or 4'9" tall.
- Booster seats help position the vehicle seat belt properly; low across the upper thighs and lower hips and across the center of the shoulder.
- Booster seats must be used with both lap and shoulder belts, NEVER the lap belt only.
- Never allow children to place shoulder belts behind back or under their arm.
- Styles include backless and high-back models.
- If the vehicle's seat back is below the top of the child's ears, a high-back booster seat is needed.
- Children are best protected in a harness until they reach the upper weight limit allowed.

**Important Message:** Weight and height requirements for child safety seats may vary. Always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions for the seat you select.



The safest place for ALL children is in the back seat.



Always read the car seat and vehicle manual for proper installation. If the car's seat belt does not keep the seat secure, read the car owner's manual or call 1-866-CAR-SEAT (227-7328) for more information. A misused safety seat may not be effective in a car crash.

