

## Car crashes are the #1 preventable cause of death of children and young adults . . .

as well as a major cause of permanent brain damage, epilepsy, and spinal cord injuries. A sudden stop at 30 miles per hour could cause the same crushing force on your child's brain and body as a fall from a 3-story building. Fortunately, by buckling up children, we can prevent most of these deaths and serious injuries.

"In late August last year our car was clipped by a truck, causing us to go out of control. Our car rolled three times, and then slid down the highway on its top. Our little daughter was in the back seat, buckled up in her car safety seat. After awakening from a daze, I was afraid to turn around for fear of what I would see. Suddenly, I heard a very familiar joy. I turned slowly to find my precious daughter, hanging upside-down . . . still secure in her safety seat . . . laughing from all the 'excitement' of the ride. I just cannot express the joy that laugh brought.

"Thanks to her safety seat, our daughter is now over a year old and growing and playing just as any other child. My wife and I feel her car safety seat was the best investment we have ever made."

Adapted from a letter by  
Brian and Cheryl Kolakowski  
Stockton, California



# SHOPPING GUIDE

## **INFANT SAFETY SEATS Rear-facing only (up to 20-22 lbs.)**

**Baby Trend** Flex-Loc, Latch-Loc; **Britax** Baby Safe, Companion; **Chicco** KeyFit; **Combi** Connection, Tyro; **Dorel-Cosco** Arriva, **Dorel-Safety 1st** Designer/Eddie Bauer Deluxe Infant; **Evenflo** Embrace; **Graco** SnugRide; **Peg Perego** Primo Viaggio

## **SELECTED CONVERTIBLE SAFETY SEATS**

Models listed are available with 5-pt. harness and certified rear facing to 30-35 lbs.; forward facing to 40 lbs. except as noted.

**Britax** Boulevard,\* Decathlon,\* Marathon,\* Roundabout  
**Dorel-Cosco** Alpha Omega/Eddie Bauer 3-in-1,\*\* Alpha Omega Elite/Eddie Bauer Deluxe 3-in-1,\*\* Scenera, Touriva/Regal Ride;  
**Dorel-Safety 1st** Enspira/Eddie Bauer Deluxe Convertible,\*\* Intera;\*\*  
**Evenflo** Orion, Titan 5/Vanguard 5, Tribute 5, Triumph 5;  
**Graco** Comfort Sport; **Lenox** Tattle Tale Convertible;  
**Triple Play** Sit 'n' Stroll (converts to stroller)  
\*certified up to 65 lbs. \*\*converts to booster

## **SAFETY SEATS AND HARNESSSES FOR LARGER CHILDREN**

**Britax** Regent (22-80 lbs.), **E-Z-ON** vests and harnesses (up to 168 lbs.), **Safe Traffic System** Ride Safer Travel Vests (35-80 lbs.)

## **SELECTED COMBINATION SEATS**

*Child must be at least one year old.*

**Dorel-Cosco** Highback Booster/Ventura DX/Eddie Bauer Highback Booster, Summit/ Eddie Bauer Deluxe Highback Booster;  
**Dorel-Safety 1st** Vantage Point/ Surveyor/ Eddie Bauer Comfort Highback Booster; **Evenflo** Chase/Vision/Traditions, Generations/Bolero;  
**Graco** Platinum CarGo, Ultra CarGo; **Lenox** Tattle Tale Toddler/Booster;  
**Recaro** Young Sport; **Simpson** Child Safety Seat

## **BELT-POSITIONING BOOSTER SEATS**

**Baby Trend** Booster; **Britax** Bodyguard, Parkway, Starriser Comfy;  
**Compass** B500 Booster; **Dorel-Cosco** Complete Voyager, High Rise/ Ambassador/Auto Booster, Protek, Traveler; **Dorel-Safety 1st** High Rider;  
**Evenflo** Big Kid, Right Fit, Sightseer; **Graco** Turbo Booster;  
**Jupiter** Komfort Kruiser; **La Roche** Grizzly Bear, Polar Bear, Teddy Bear;  
**Pro Rider** CNS Booster; **Recaro** Young Style, Start;  
**Safety Angel** Ride Rytte (may be used with E-Z-ON harnesses)

Call SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. for information about child restraints sold by vehicle dealers, car beds for babies who must lie flat, products for children with special needs, air travel.

**SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A., Box 553, Altadena, CA 91003**

**(800) 745-SAFE (310) 222-6860 [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)**

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**26th Edition: August 2005**

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American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 2

Producer: Cheryl A. Kim

Cover Photo: Cosco

# The Perfect Gift



## Your Child's Safety

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT CAR SAFETY SEATS

## How can I tell if my child's seat is a "safe" one?

All safety seats must pass crash tests and be certified that they meet federal safety standards. When you buy a new seat, mail in the registration card for notification of possible defects. Keep the instruction booklet with the seat and make an extra file copy with a notation of the manufacture date, found on a sticker glued to the seat.

## Are used car seats safe?

Avoid buying a used car seat at a thrift shop or garage sale, since it could be on recall or have invisible crash damage. If you already have a car seat, be sure it has complete identification stickers, including date made; is less than 10 years old, preferably less than five; has all of its parts, including the instruction booklet; then check the most recent recall list.

## Which car seat is the "best?" The "best" seat is the one that... Fits your child

A small, rear-facing-only seat may be convenient for newborns, but most babies need a larger "convertible" seat at about six months. To prevent serious spinal injuries, babies should continue facing the rear as long as possible (preferably until age two). When children reach the rear-facing limits of a convertible seat (30-35 pounds or head near the top edge), it is time to ride in a forward-facing safety seat with a harness. Most children need a booster from about age 4 until they are at least 8-10 years old.\*

## Fits your car(s)

Try before you buy! Read and follow both sets of instructions—the booklet included with the safety seat and the "child restraint" section in your vehicle owner's manual. Make sure the safety seat you have chosen fits in the back seat of the car, matches the shape of the vehicle seat cushion, and can be firmly attached with the vehicle belt or LATCH.\*\*

## Fits the needs of your family

Choose a seat that is easy to use correctly, including installing it in your car(s) and adjusting the harness. The "best" safety seat for your family is the one you and your child will be comfortable using on every ride.

*\*\*Lower Anchors and Tethers for CHildren. All new cars and many made since 2000 have special hardware to attach child safety seats.*

## Why should children ride in the back seat?

The back seat is almost twice as safe as the front, whether or not the vehicle has air bags. Recent research indicates that children should ride in the back seat until they reach age 15.

## How do I install my child's car seat?

Using your entire weight, press the safety seat into the vehicle seat while tightening the lap portion of the vehicle belt or the LATCH\*\* strap. Check the vehicle owner's manual for instructions to prevent the belt from loosening. To test for a tight installation, hold the safety seat at the belt path, then push and pull toward the front and sides of the vehicle.

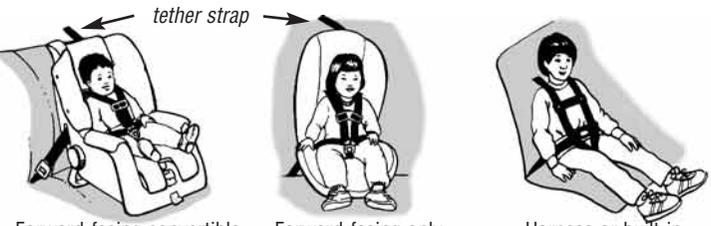
## How can I keep my child in the car seat?

- Start a lifelong habit with baby's first ride.
- Strengthen the habit by never making an exception.
- Encourage good passengers with praise, singing, games.
- Keep a bag of special soft toys and books in the car.
- Make regular stops to stretch.
- Introduce your child to a new safety seat with a short trip for fun.
- Always wear your own safety belt!

## Four Rules for Auto Safety

1. Choose a safety seat that fits your child
2. Check that it fits tightly in the car
3. Follow instructions exactly
4. Buckle up children in the back seat

# HOW TO CHOOSE AND USE CAR SAFETY SEATS

	<b>Newborns and Older Babies</b> Face rear as long as possible (minimum 12 months)	<b>Young Children</b> Use seat with harness as long as possible (minimum 3-4 yrs.)	<b>Older Children</b> Use belt-positioning booster until child can pass 5-Step Test (see below).
<b>Type of Safety Seat</b>	<p><i>Passenger air bags can cause fatal injuries to infants!</i></p>  <p>Rear-facing infant seat (most fit up to 22 lbs.) Rear-facing convertible (most fit up to 30-35 lbs.)</p>	 <p>Forward-facing convertible (most fit up to 40 lbs.) Forward-facing only (most fit up to 40 lbs.) Harness or built-in (weight limits vary)</p>	 <p>Belt-positioning booster with lap and shoulder belt (From about age 4 to at least age 8-10*) Lap and shoulder belt</p>
<b>How to Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baby <b>must</b> face back of car</li> <li>• Safety seat is tilted about halfway back</li> <li>• Baby's head does not flop forward</li> <li>• Straps are in slots at or below shoulder level</li> <li>• Harness is adjusted snugly before adding blankets</li> <li>• Baby's head is at least 1" below top edge of seat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child sits upright</li> <li>• Harness is very snug (cannot pinch strap between fingers)</li> <li>• Chest clip is at armpit level</li> <li>• Straps are in slots at or above shoulder level</li> <li>• Top strap slots <b>must</b> be used for some convertible seats</li> <li>• Top tether strap is attached to vehicle.</li> </ul>	<p>*Try the <b>5-Step Test</b> to find out if the child is ready for vehicle belts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the child sit all the way back against the auto seat?</li> <li>2. Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat?</li> <li>3. Does the belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm?</li> <li>4. Is the lap belt as low as possible, touching the thighs?</li> <li>5. Can the child stay seated like this for the whole trip?</li> </ol>
<b>Errors to Avoid</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facing baby forward</li> <li>• Placing baby in front of air bag</li> <li>• Using household carrier in car</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letting the straps slip down on the arms</li> <li>• Leaving some slack in the harness</li> <li>• Letting the child out of the seat "just this once"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting two people in one belt</li> <li>• Putting shoulder belt under arm or behind back</li> <li>• Using only lap belt with a booster</li> </ul>