



PHOENIX CHILDREN'S *Hospital*

Child Passenger Safety



WHAT IS THE SAFEST CAR SEAT FOR MY CHILD?

- One that fits your:
 - Child’s age and size
 - Car, truck, or van. The car seat should not move more than one inch from side to side or toward the front of the vehicle
 - One that is easy for you to use
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommends that you replace your car seat after a moderate to severe crash. For more information about replacing your child's car seat after a crash, visit www.phoenixchildrens.com.
- Do not put your child in a used car seat. The seat may have been in a crash. The seat may not have instructions or all the parts. The seat may not have the label that tells you the make and model number. The car seat may have been recalled. To find out if a car seat has been recalled, call NHTSA at 1-888-327-4236 or visit their website, www.nhtsa.gov.
- Every time your child rides, the car seat must be used correctly. Read your car seat instructions and vehicle’s manual carefully. If you want more information on how to use your car seat correctly, call The Injury Prevention Center at Phoenix Children’s Hospital at (602) 546-0960.

How to Keep Your Child Passenger Safe

Weight	Birth-20 pounds	20-40 pounds	40-100 pounds	over 80 pounds
Age or height				
Birth to 2 years old*	rear-facing car seat	rear-facing convertible seat for children up to 35 pounds		
over 2 years old		forward-facing car seat with a harness		
under 4'9" tall			booster seat	
over 4'9" tall				safety belt in the back seat

* New recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics, April 2009

REAR-FACING CAR SEAT

Infants and children should ride in rear-facing car seats until they are both:

- At least 2 years old and
- Weigh 20 pounds
- Rear-facing car seats best protect your child's neck, spine and back.
- Never put a rear facing seat in the front seat with an air bag that is turned on.
- Keep the harness straps snug and keep the harness clip at armpit level.
- The harness straps should go through the lower slots that are at or below the level of your child's shoulders.
- The rear facing seat should lean back no more than a 45-degree angle.
- If your child outgrows the infant seat before his or her second birthday, use a convertible car seat in the rear-facing position. Choose a rear-facing convertible seat that can hold a child up to 30-35 pounds.
- Although current law requires the use of a rear-facing car seat until the child is one year old and at least 20 pounds, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends using the rear-facing car seat until the child is 2 years old or reaches the upper weight limit of the car seat (generally 30-35 pounds).



FORWARD-FACING CAR SEATS

Children should ride in forward-facing car seats when they are more than 2 years old and weigh between 20 and 40 pounds.

- Keep the harness straps snug and keep the harness clip at armpit level.
- The harness straps should go through the upper slots that are at or above the level of your child's shoulders.
- The forward-facing car seat should sit up straight at a 90-degree angle.



- If possible, use a strap that attaches the top of the car seat to a part of the car. This is called a tether strap. It helps keep the child's head from moving too far forward in a crash. Read your carseat and auto manual to learn more about using a tether strap.

BOOSTER SEATS

Children who weigh between 40 and 100 pounds and are under 4 feet 9 inches tall should use a booster seat.

- A booster seat makes the lap and shoulder belts fit low over the child's thighs and hips and snug over the shoulder.
- A booster seat is used with both the lap and shoulder belts. If your child weighs over 40 pounds and the car has only lap belts, ask your auto dealership to install shoulder belts.



SAFETY BELTS

Children who weigh over 80 pounds and more than 4 feet 9 inches tall should wear the safety belts adults use.*

- The lap and shoulder belt should fit right, low over the thighs and hips and snug over the shoulder.
- Children must be tall enough to sit with knees bent at the edge of the seat without slouching.*
- Never put a shoulder belt under the child's arm or behind the back.
- All children under the age of 13 should always ride in the back seat.



* This is a general guideline.

WHAT IS THE ARIZONA LAW?

The Arizona Child Passenger Restraint Law says all children under 5 years of age need to be in a child passenger restraint device when in a moving vehicle.

MORE SAFE RIDING TIPS

- Never let children ride in the cargo parts of pick-up trucks, station wagons, or mini-vans.
- Never strap two children into one safety belt.
- Never leave sharp or heavy objects, toys, or packages loose in the car. A sudden stop or crash could make them fly in the car and hurt someone.
- Cover metal parts of car seats in hot weather. Belt and harness buckles can cause serious burns.
- Never leave a child alone in a car, truck, or van. A car parked in direct sunlight for only 15 minutes can get to 131 to 172 degrees inside. High temperatures could lead to heat exhaustion or death.
- Always lock all doors, and teach children not to play with door handles or locks.
- Always check to see if children are playing around your car before moving it.

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

For additional information regarding safe transportation for children with special healthcare needs, please contact the Injury Prevention Center.



**PHOENIX
CHILDREN'S**

Injury Prevention Center

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Child passenger safety seat illustrations courtesy of the Center for Injury Research and Prevention at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia