

CAR SEAT BASICS

BASIC CAR SEAT RULES

- Kids 12 and under should ALWAYS ride in the back seat. This cuts their risk of death by 36 percent.
- Select the car seat that best fits your child, your vehicle and your budget. Features vary by model. Select one that has the features that will allow you to use it correctly EVERY time.
- When you buy a car seat, make sure the store offers a return policy in case it doesn't fit your needs. Have your seat inspected by a certified child passenger safety technician for free at one of Children's checkup events or fitting station. Visit [ChildrensOmaha.org/car-seat-safety](https://www.ChildrensOmaha.org/car-seat-safety) or call 402.955.8090 for times and locations.
- Make sure that the car seat harness fits snugly on your child (that you cannot pinch any webbing at the shoulder) and the retainer clip is at armpit level. The car seat should fit snugly in your vehicle (cannot move more than 1 inch from side to side or front to back). Seatbelts or Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) should be properly locked.
- For LATCH, the combined weight limit is 65 lbs., (child's weight plus the weight of the car seat) for most vehicles. Check the vehicle's owner's manual. If your child and car seat weigh more than 65 lbs., please use the vehicle seat belt.
- The center seat is the safest place for car seats, but only if it can be properly installed in that location. Keep your baby rear-facing for as long as possible. Children must ride rear-facing until age 2. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children remain rear-facing until they reach the upper weight limit of the car seat.
- Never put a rear-facing car seat in front of an active front airbag.
- For forward-facing seats, always use the tether (the strap in the back of the seat by the child's head)
- Leave your children in a 5-point harness as long as the seat allows, do not rush into a booster seat. Kids should be in a car seat or booster until they can be seated properly in a seatbelt. For most kids, this is around 8-12 years old.
- Thoroughly read the owner's manuals for the car seat and your vehicle.
- Avoid used car seats, expired car seats or those with an unknown history. They may have been in a crash. Do not use a car seat that shows any cracks or damage, or those with missing labels, model number, manufacturing date, instructions or parts.
- Please give driving your complete, unimpaired attention and wear your own seatbelt all the time. These two simple steps are among these easiest ways you can protect yourself and your passengers from injury or death.