

# BASIC CAR SEAT SAFETY

Be sure to buckle up the right way on every ride!

**SAFE  
KIDS**  
WORLDWIDE™

## All children must use a car seat, booster seat or seat belt.

- My child always rides in a back seat and never in front of an airbag.
- Everyone in my car buckles up on every ride using the right car seat, booster seat or seat belt for each person's age and size.
- My child's car seat has all of its parts, labels and instructions and has never been in a crash.
- I follow the instructions for my car and my car seat so that my child is buckled in right and tight.
- My child's car seat has never been in a crash.
- I never leave my child alone in a car.



Use our online [Ultimate Car Seat Guide](http://www.safekids.org/ultimate-car-seat-guide) for information on all your car seat needs.  
[www.safekids.org/ultimate-car-seat-guide](http://www.safekids.org/ultimate-car-seat-guide)

## Babies under 2 use rear-facing car seats

- My child always rides in a back seat and never in front of an air bag.
- My child always rides in a car seat made for his or her size and age.
- My child sits facing the back of the car in his or her car seat.
- The harness straps are snug on my child, and I can't pinch the buckled strap at the shoulder.
- My child's car seat is buckled tightly in the car and doesn't move more than one inch when I pull it where the seatbelt is buckled/attached.
- My child uses a bigger rear-facing car seat until he or she outgrows the harness. Many harnesses go to 35, 40 or 45 pounds.
- I never leave my child alone in a car.



## Toddlers and big kids use forward-facing car seats with a top tether

**If my child is over age 2 AND has outgrown the weight or height limits for the rear-facing seat:**

- My child always rides in a back seat.
- My child always rides in a car seat made for his or her size and age.
- The harness straps are snug on my child, and I can't pinch the buckled strap at the shoulder.
- My child's car seat is buckled tightly in the car and doesn't move more than one inch when I pull it at the belt path. I use the top tether.
- My child uses this car seat until he or she outgrows the harness. Many harnesses go to 50 pounds or more.



## Older, bigger kids use booster seats with lap and shoulder seat belts

**If my child has outgrown the weight or height limit of the forward-facing car seat:**

- My child always rides in a back seat.
- My child always rides on a booster seat using a lap and shoulder seat belt.
- The lap belt sits low on his or her hips, not the stomach.
- The shoulder belt is on my child's shoulder – not on the neck, under the arm or behind the back.
- The seat belt is snug, flat and comfortable on my child.
- My child may be between 8-12 years of age before the seat belt fits without a booster.



## Kids ready for seat belts

**If my child has outgrown the booster seat:**

- My child always rides in a back seat until age 13.
- My child always uses a lap and shoulder seat belt.
- The lap belt sits low on my child's hips, not the stomach.
- The shoulder belt is on my child's shoulder – not on the neck, under the arm or behind the back.
- My child's back is firmly against the vehicle seat back, his or her knees bend at the front edge of the vehicle seat, and he or she can sit this way for the whole ride.
- The seat belt is snug, flat and comfortable on my child. If the seat belt does not fit right, my child must use a booster seat.

