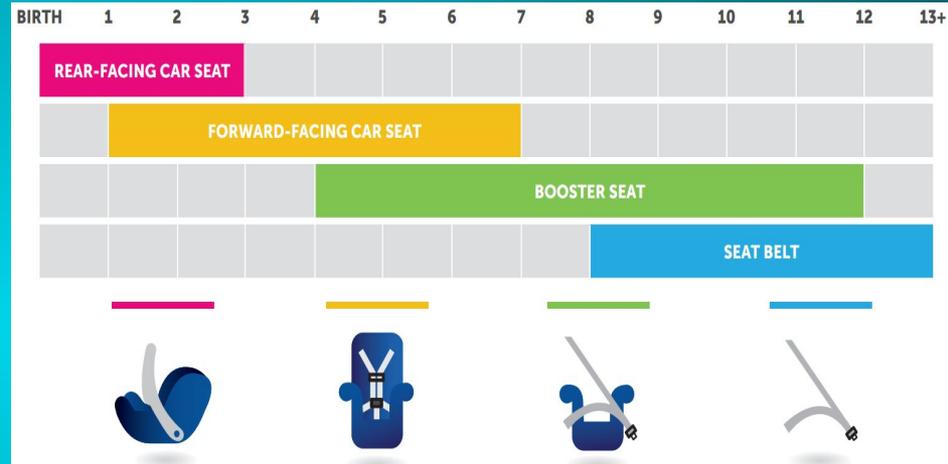


Car Seat Safety for Infants

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Guidelines for infant car seats

- ❖ Always when traveling in a motor vehicle (Durham et al., 2023).
- ❖ Ensure car seat is appropriate for car type
 - Not all fit every car (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
- ❖ Back seat until at least 12 years old (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
- ❖ Rear facing
 - Under 1 - always (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
 - 1-3 years old - as long as possible until weight/height limits reached (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
 - Semi-reclined position - keep airway open (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
- ❖ Forward facing
 - 1-3 years old - if weight/height limits for rear facing car seat reached (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
 - 4-7 years old - with harness and tether until weight/height limits reached (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
- ❖ Booster seat
 - 4-7 years old - if weight/height limits of forward facing seat reached (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
 - 8-12 years old - until seat belt fits child correctly (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
 - Lie snugly across shoulder, chest, and upper thighs (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
 - Does not cross neck, face, or stomach (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).



(U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).

Choosing The Right Car Seat For Newborns & Infants

Infant Only Car Seat

An infant only car seat is specifically designed for newborns and small babies. “An infant-only car seat can be used until your baby weighs 20 to 22 pounds or their head is within 1 inch of the top of the seat. They are generally lighter in weight and designed to be portable” (Rosen, 2022, p.1). Many parents prefer the convenience of an infant car seat because the seat can be removed from the car without having to unstrap and possibly wake a sleeping baby. The car seat base remains strapped into the vehicle; the carrier simply snaps in and out of the base (Rosen, 2022).



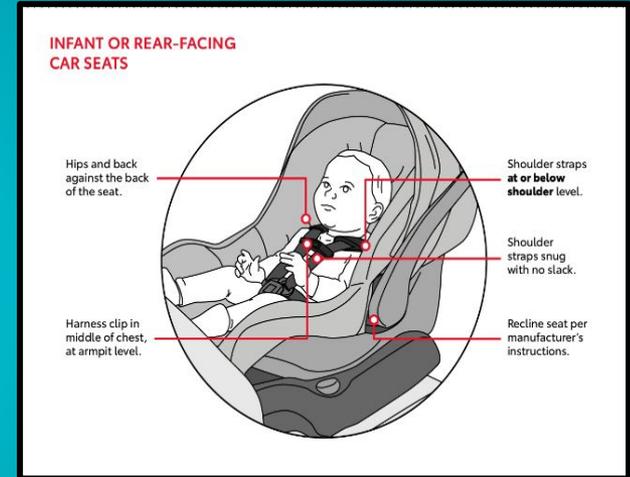
Convertible Car Seat

A convertible car seat may also be used for newborns, it can be used in both rear-facing and forward-facing positions as your child grows. For newborns the convertible car seat should be used in the rear-facing position. The rear-facing position is the most safest for infants and should be used until your child reaches up to 40-50lbs. “Convertible seats are a great option if you want a product that will last through the years since they can be installed as either a rear- or forward-facing seat” (Rosen, 2022, p.1). By choosing a convertible car seat and ensuring it is properly installed and adjusted, you can provide a safe and comfortable ride for the newborn/infant.



Steps to Securing the Infant the Car Seat

1. Place the infant in the car seat with their back flat against the car seat (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
2. Put the harness straps over the child's shoulders making sure they lie flat and are not twisted (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
3. Buckle the harness and the chest clip and tighten it until snug .
 - a. Bulky clothing or blankets can prevent a snug fit so place the baby in the car seat first and then add blankets or coats OVER the harness.
 - b. For very young infants, if there is a gap between the buckle and the baby's groin, you can place a small rolled towel in that space for a more secure fit (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
4. Place the chest clip at the level of the infants' armpits (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).
5. Never place a rear-facing seat in front of an active air bag (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).

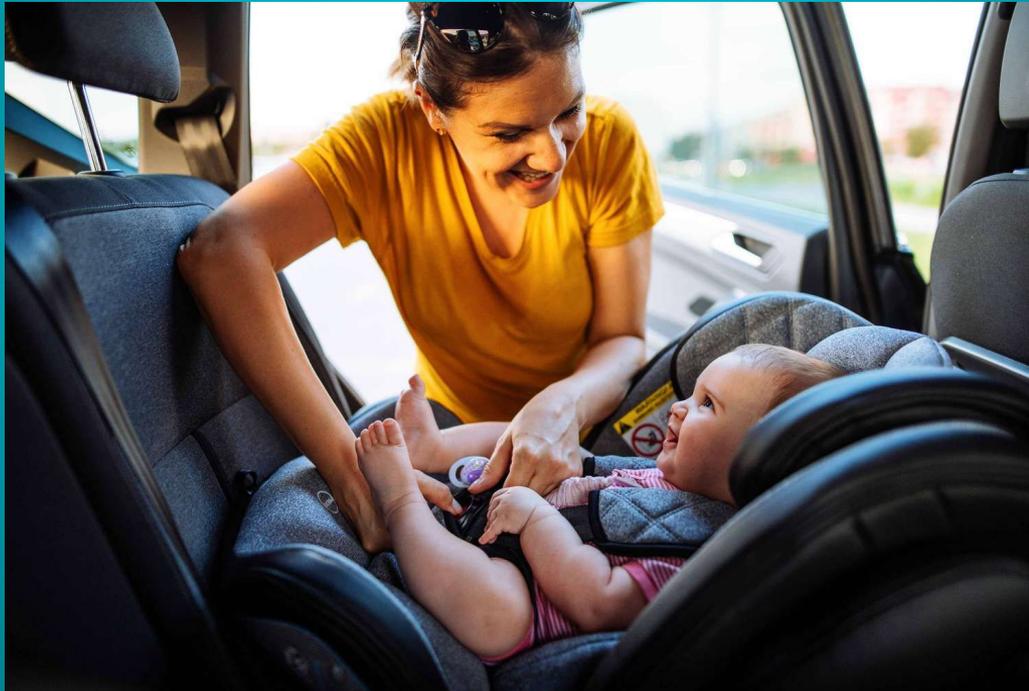


***Best Practice:** “When your child outgrows the infant car seat, switch to a convertible or all-in-one car seat and use it in the rear-facing position. These seats typically have weight and height limits for the rear-facing position that allow you to keep your child rear-facing longer (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.).”

NOTE: Every car seat and vehicle are slightly different, pay close attention to the instruction manual of both the car seat manufacturer and vehicle manual for correct installation of car seats.

How to Install a Rear-Facing Infant Car Seat

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bxy_Tf5VKTc



(U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.)

Car Seat Registration

- Registering your baby's car seat is important because it allows for any notification related to recalls or safety concerns from the manufacturer (U.S. Department of Transportation, n.d.)
- All car seats should come with a registration card where your contact information and the car seat's information will be filled out. Your name, address, e-mail, as well as the car seat's date of purchase, model, and serial number should all be included in the registration. Once this information is complete the card can be mailed out.
- One can also register their car seat online. The U.S. Department of Transportation website allows the user to select their car seat brand/manufacturer and then gives them a link to the manufacturer website to register.
- In 2017, around 700,000 car seats were recalled but only 30% of the recalled seats were sent back to the manufacturer (The Carlson Law Firm, 2020). This means that thousands of babies were traveling in unsafe and dangerous car seats.



Car Seat Safety

- ❖ Children should be kept facing until at least 2 or until they have outgrown their rear facing seat (Illinois Secretary of State, n.d.).
 - Seats have guidelines for height and weight that should be followed to know when the child has outgrown the seat (Illinois Secretary of State, n.d.).
- ❖ Make sure that the seat is labeled with an expiration date, manufacture date, and model number (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
 - If expired, discard the seat.
 - Seats should also be discarded if used for longer than 6 years (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).(SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
 - Check the model number for recalls to ensure no recall is in place for your seat (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
- ❖ Check the seat for all parts and make sure they are in working order (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
 - Contact the manufacturer if any parts are missing or broken.
- ❖ Replace the seat after moderate or severe car accidents (NHTSA, n.d.).
 - Minor accidents do not require replacement. This includes accidents in which the car is able to be driven after, no persons i the car sustained injury, no airbags deployed, the door near the seat was unharmed, and there is no damage to the seat (NHTSA, n.d.).
- ❖ Do not add toys or inserts to the seat (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
 - Inserts not provided with the seat can be suffocation risks (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
 - Toys can become a projectile in a crash (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
- ❖ Remove coats or large, puffy clothing items prior to placing the infant in the seat (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
 - These items prevent a proper harness fit, which can lead to ejection in the case of an accident (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
- ❖ Only use previously owned car seats from people you know, and ask for a full history of the seat (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
 - Do not buy car seats from resale stores as a full history is unable to be obtained (SUNY Upstate Medical University, n.d.).
- ❖ Do not place car seat in front of an airbag or in the front seat of a car (Illinois Secretary of State, n.d.).



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