

Car Seats with Best Fit for Premies and Small Newborns As of 4/07

Car Seats With Low Shoulder Harness Positions (8 inches or lower)

The list below only includes rear-facing seats with lowest harness positions of 8 inches or less. Survey covers common seats on market today or recently available, but may not be all-inclusive. Some products have shoulder strap slots and others have an adjustable back that moves the shoulder strap height up as the baby grows.

Products are listed based on minimum weight allowed by the manufacturer.

Lowest slot height listed (measured from bottom of back—with some pressure applied to the pad—up to middle of the slot).

[I] = Infant-only seat; [C] = Convertible seat

Car seats with weight limit below 5 pounds:

Britax: [I] Companion (7.25"), 4 pounds (head pad must always be used for side impact protection, newborn foam insert available for babies under 7 pounds – order from Britax)

Chicco: [I] KeyFit (original) and KeyFit 30 (6.5"), 4 pounds (use of newborn insert for babies from 4 to 11 pounds is highly recommended. It creates a slightly more reclined position for a newborn which can help keep the baby's head from falling forward)

Combi: [I] Connection (7.5" with infant insert, 8" without—use of the insert is highly recommended), **no minimum weight**

Compass: [I] I-400 (4.75"), 4 pounds

Graco: [I] Assura (7.5"), **no minimum weight** (only available in institutional packs of 5 at this time*)

Car seats with lower weight limit of 5 pounds:

Baby Trend: [I] LATCH-Loc (5.5")

Combi: [I] Centre ST (6.5"); Centre EX/DX (7.5 with lower infant insert, 8" without lower insert)

Dorel-Cosco/Safety 1st: [I] Arriva/Turnabout (8"), Eddie Bauer Infant (7"), Designer 22 (7")

Evenflo: [I] Embrace (4" with lower infant insert, 4.5" without insert). [C] , Titan (6" with lower pad, 6.5" without lower pad); Triumph (7.5"), Tribute (8"); Vanguard (7.25")

Graco: [I] Snug Ride (7.5"), Infant Safe Seat (6.5"); [C] Comfort Sport, (7.5")

Peg Perego: [I] Primo Viaggio SIP (6.5"); (head pad provides side impact protection [SIP] and cannot be removed; however some practitioners report that, due to its location, it may push a shorter preemie's head forward.)

Car beds currently available

Angel Guard Products: Angel Ride Infant Car Bed, birth to 9 pounds; order from Mercury Distributing, 800-815-6330; www.mercurydistributing.com

Dorel: Cosco Dream Ride SE, 5 to 20 pounds, 800-544-1108, www.djgusa.com

Snug Seat: Car Bed, birth to 21 pounds, (discontinued—some hospitals may have loaners available), 800-336-7684, www.snugseat.com

* KeyFit can be ordered from Mercury Distributing and some other online or specialty stores without stroller. KeyFit 30 will be available with or without the stroller in retail as well as online stores.

Newborn head support

New babies do not have enough strength in their necks to hold their heads up. Their heads tend to flop sideways or (if the car seat is too upright) flop forward. If the newborn baby's head flops forward toward the chest, breathing may be affected, so it is extremely important to prevent this from happening.

Head support pads:

- Many car seats have built-in head support or removable pads for newborns. Most can be removed if they do not improve the head position and/or keep the newborn's head from falling forward. Some have much more padding behind the head than others, which can push the head forward.
- Some pads are only in the head area, others only for the buttocks/hip area, and still others for the whole head and body.
- A few car seats have special side-impact pads that may look like simple head supports. These should NEVER be removed.
- Pads sold separately by other companies are NOT recommended (see below) even though they may state that they have passed crash tests. There are no specific tests for them and car seat manufacturers do not encourage their use. No puffy or thick padding that did not come as part of the car seat should be placed behind the baby's head or back or under the buttocks.

Padded inserts developed by the car seat manufacturer

These are tested with the car seats, although there are no specific tests to make sure that they actually improved newborn positioning. These can be used if they improve the baby's position. Some are in the head area only but others are intended to offer full-body support. Many of these are not necessary—some actually have thick padding and may not work well for newborn head position. Most can be removed if they do not help position the baby properly and keep the head from falling forward. They must be installed so that the harness straps go through the proper holes in the pad.

The newborn pads of the **Chicco KeyFit** and **Combi Connection** and the lower pad on the **Combi Centre** are highly recommended for improving newborn fit.

Pads that are part of the protection system

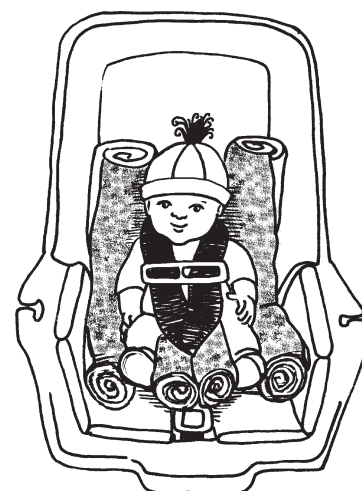
Some pads that look like they may be simply for newborn support actually are part of the system of side-impact protection (SIP), such as the **Britax Companion** and **Peg Perego Primo Viaggio SIP**. These should never be removed. The upper pad of the **Combi Centre** is part of the headrest and cannot be removed.

Support pads that are sold separately

Some pads are made by other manufacturers. These are not recommended as they have not been tested with specific car seats. Some may make the harness fit badly or may push the newborn baby's head forward into an unsafe position.

Rolled-blanket method of support (illustration right)

If an infant support pad pushes a baby's head forward, use rolled blankets instead. The benefit of this method is that there is nothing placed behind the baby's back and head. Roll small receiving blankets or cloth diapers and place them along both sides of the baby's body and head.



Names of seat models

In some cases, the model name is on a label. In others, it appears only on sales tags, the box, and the instructions. The model name of a travel system (stroller plus car seat) may be different from the car seat name. You may need to have the name in the future, so you may want to write the name on the seat using an indelible marker. Also be sure to keep the instructions with the seat.

Distributors: (may not be a complete list)

Evenflo

Car seats for infants: contacts for institutional sales (\$500 or over); use NSR below for smaller purchases

Linda Galer, (877) 288-0288, lindagaler@aol.com (Indiana and states to the west of Indiana, except Texas)

Patsy Pilcher (800) 768-6077, ppilcher@bellsouth.net (eastern states)

National Safety Resources (NSR)

Infant car seats: Cosco, Evenflo, Graco

Car beds: Angel Guard and Cosco Dream Ride SE

<http://www.nsrinc.org>

800-620-2268

LBI Distributors, Inc.

<http://www.lbidistributors.com/>

609-860-6332

Car seats for infants: Graco Assura and Snug Ride

Mercury Distributing

<http://www.mercurydistributing.com/>

330-723-4739

Car seats for infants: Chicco, Combi, Dorel (Cosco, Safety 1st) Nania,

Car beds: Angel Guard and Cosco Dream Ride SE

Prevention Alternatives, Inc.

Many CR models discounted including Graco Assura and Snug Ride, Cosco Arriva, and Chicco KeyFit, Cosco DreamRide and Angel Guard Angel Ride car beds

517-927-7731, shinn@comcast.net

Angel Guard – Angel Ride car bed

<http://www.angel-guard.com> (to purchase directly; next-day delivery available)

Burrows, 847-537-7300 www.burrowsco.com

Cardinal Health, 800-234-8701 www.cardinal.com

Mercury Distributing, 800-815-6330 (above)

Prevention Alternatives (above)