

# One Minute Safety Seat Checkup

- ☑ Is the safety seat in the back seat?
- ☑ Is the safety seat installed correctly and tightly in the vehicle with the safety belt or LATCH system?
- ☑ Is the safety belt routed correctly?
- ☑ Is the safety seat facing the correct way? (rear-facing for an infant under 1 year **and** less than 20 pounds or forward-facing for a child at least 1 year of age **and** at least 20 pounds)
- ☑ Are the shoulder straps in the correct slot? Check child safety seat instructions.
- ☑ Is the child in the safety seat securely?
- ☑ Shoulder straps snug?
- ☑ Harness clip positioned at armpit level?
- ☑ Straps not twisted?
- ☑ Harness buckle fastened?
- ☑ If the child is over 40 pounds, is the child in the booster seat with lap and shoulder belt buckled?
- ☑ Is child mature enough to sit still in a booster seat?
- ☑ Is an older child in a lap/shoulder safety belt system?

## REMEMBER!

- Never use second-hand child safety seats.
- See the NHTSA guidelines on when you can re-use a child safety seat after a crash at: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/CPS/>
- In Texas, it is considered best practice to replace a child safety seat if it is more than 5 years old.
- Never use after-market padding products or safety belt adjusters.
- Do not put child with heavy clothing or blankets under harness straps. Instead, place blanket or jacket over child after they have been secured in the harness system.



**Never put an infant in the front seat of a vehicle when an air bag is present.**



**Children 12 and under should always ride properly restrained in the back seat of a vehicle.**

For more information or to locate a child safety seat technician contact:

**Passenger Safety**  
**Texas AgriLife Extension Service**  
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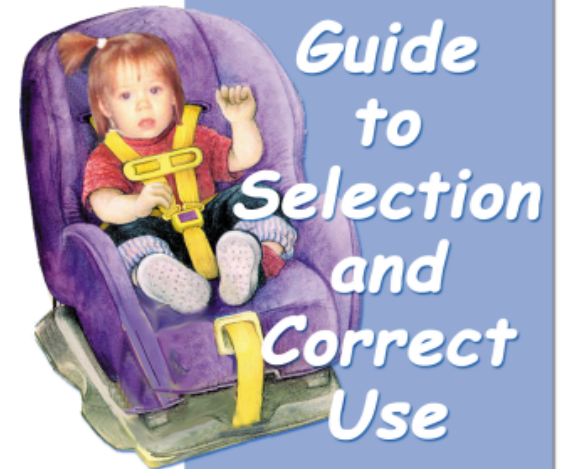
**Locate a Technician**  
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## CHILD SAFETY SEATS The 4 Steps



## STEP 1 Rear-Facing Seats

### Infant Only



**Infant**  
Birth to at least 1 year and 20 lbs.



**Rear-facing Infant Seat**

### Rear-facing Convertible



**Older Infant**  
20 to 30/35 lbs.



**Rear-facing Convertible Seat**

- Infants should ride rear-facing until at least 1 year of age **AND** at least 20 pounds. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies be kept rear-facing until they reach the maximum weight or height allowed by the maker of the safety seat.
- Recline a rear-facing child safety seat at no more than a 45 degree angle.
- Keep harness straps snug and fasten harness retainer clip at armpit level.
- Route harness straps in lower slots at or below shoulder level on rear-facing seats.

## STEP 2 Forward-Facing Seats



**Toddler**  
One year or more and 20 to 40 lbs.



**Forward-facing Convertible Seat**

or



**Combination Seat w/Harness**

- Route harness straps in appropriate slots at or above shoulder level (see child safety seat instructions).
- Place child safety seat in upright position.
- Keep harness straps snug and fasten harness retainer clip at armpit level.
- Keep child in a 5 point harness until the weight and height limit of seat.
- Always use the tether strap when available.

## STEP 3 Booster Seats



**Child**  
over 40 lbs. and under 4'9"



**High Back Booster**

or



**Backless Booster**

- Belt positioning boosters are for children 4 years old and less than 4'9" tall.
- All booster seats **must** be used with a lap/shoulder belt. Backless boosters must have head support in the vehicle.
- A booster seat allows the lap/shoulder belt to fit correctly; low over hips and upper thighs and snug over the shoulder.
- Higher harness weight seats are available for children not mature enough to ride in a booster seat.

## STEP 4 Lap/Shoulder Belts



**Older Child**  
Over 4'9"



**Lap/Shoulder Belt in Vehicle**

- Most children 4'9" and over (usually age 8-12 years old) will fit properly in a lap/shoulder belt.
- A child is ready for a lap/shoulder belt when he/she can sit with his/her back against the back of the seat and his/her knees can bend at the edge of the seat.
- Never put a shoulder belt under a child's arm or behind his/her back.
- Lap/shoulder belts should fit low over hips and upper thighs and snug over the shoulder. The lap portion should NOT be over the child's abdomen.

## Child Safety Seat Installation Tips

- Check child safety seat instructions and vehicle owner's manual to correctly install the child safety seat.
- To get a snug fit, put weight on the child safety seat, pushing it down into the vehicle seat cushion while pulling the safety belt or, if appropriate, LATCH attachments tight. The seat should not move front to back and side to side more than one inch when tugging on it at the belt path.
- Unless the LATCH system is used, the safety belts of the vehicle must be used and locked to hold the safety seat firmly in place.