



Belt-positioning booster seat

After your child has reached the upper weight limit of his or her harnessed seat, you can either remove the harness for use as a booster seat or, if you are moving from a forward-facing convertible seat, you will need to purchase a booster seat. Seat belts are not designed for people under 4 feet, 9 inches tall, and the belts will not lay over the bony structures properly without a booster seat. Typically a belt-positioning booster seat will fit a child from 4 to 10 years old.

- Children younger than 4 years old should **not** ride in a booster seat, as they are not developmentally mature enough. At this age, they need a full harness to ensure they ride safely.
- Not all boosters are the same. Some fit your child and vehicle better than others. Choose your booster carefully.
- The shoulder belt must be adjusted to lay over the middle of the shoulder, and the lap belt must be routed appropriately using the booster seat directions.
- Your child can have much more movement in a booster seat, so it is **VERY IMPORTANT** to have the belts fit his or her body snugly.

Lap/shoulder seat belts

When your child has reached the upper limits of the booster seat, he or she then can graduate to the seat belt system. **One of the most common mistakes is moving your child out of a booster too early.** To determine when your child is ready for a seat belt, follow these recommendations:

- Child's knees bend naturally over the vehicle seat **while seated against the back of the seat.** If they don't do so comfortably, your child will slouch down. This will cause the belt to ride too high over the abdomen/stomach.
- Child's shoulder belt must lay over the middle, between his or her neck and arm, and the lap belt should sit on the upper thighs across the child's hip bones.
- Can the child sit like this the entire ride?
- Children age 13 and younger should ride in the back seat to avoid injury from the front seat airbag in the event of an accident.

For more information about Norton Children's Prevention & Wellness or to register for a free class, visit NortonChildrens.com/Prevention.



Car Safety Seats

Choosing the correct car seat for your child



Norton Children's Prevention & Wellness is funded by the Norton Children's Hospital Foundation. To learn how to donate, volunteer or give support, visit HelpNortonChildrens.com.



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NORTON Children's Hospital

231 E. Chestnut St.
Louisville, KY 40202
(502) 629-6000
NortonChildrens.com



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Infant seat

Used from **birth to the manufacturer's upper weight and height limits** as noted on a sticker on the seat.

- **ALWAYS** read your seat and vehicle instructions regarding car seat installation.
- The seat **MUST ALWAYS** be installed rear-facing with the handle in the designated position.
- **NEVER** place a rear-facing seat in front of an active airbag.
- Harness straps should come through the slots in the back of the seat at or just below the level of your baby's shoulder.
- Keep the harness clip at armpit level.
- **ALWAYS** keep the harness straps snug. You should not be able to pinch the shoulder straps between your fingers.
- The seat must be partially reclined so the baby's head doesn't fall forward. To check for the proper angle, look for the leveling ball or line on the seat. You do **NOT** want the baby's head to fall forward.

Rear-facing convertible

May be used for children from **birth to 40** pounds. This seat choice is not as convenient but eliminates the need for an infant-only seat. *The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ride in a rear-facing seat until they have reached the upper height and weight limits recommended by the car seat manufacturer.*

- **READ** the labels on the seat to see the weight and height limits for your child now and for his or her growth later.
- Keep your child rear-facing in this seat until he or she reaches the seat's upper weight and height limits. Most seats will accommodate children up to 40 pounds.
- Continue to keep the harness snug and at or just below shoulder level. Keep the harness clip at armpit level.
- Put the recline adjuster in the appropriate position for a rear-facing seat.

Free car seat checks available!

If you need help installing your safety seat or would like a certified car seat technician to check whether you've installed it properly, Norton Children's Prevention & Wellness offers year-round car seat checks. To schedule, call Norton Children's Prevention & Wellness at **(502) 629-7358**.

Forward-facing convertible

Adjust the following to change a rear-facing seat to forward-facing:

- Change the seat's recline adjuster to the upright position.
- Adjust the harness straps to be at or slightly above the child's shoulders.
- Use the top tether strap located on the back of the seat. Read the vehicle's instruction manual to find the correct anchor to attach the tether strap.

LATCH system cautions

- If you are using the Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH) system, there is no need to also use the seat belt. To prevent your child from being hurt by the unused seat belt, buckle it behind the seat and install the seat with the anchors.
- The anchors have a weight limit. Switch to using the seat belt if your child's weight plus the weight of the seat is over 65 pounds. Typically, this will be when your child reaches 40 pounds.

Toddler car seat/belt-positioning booster seat

Toddler seats are forward-facing-only seats. Read the label for minimum and maximum weight limits. They have a full harness (with a noted weight limit) that can be removed for use as a booster seat. The booster seat will have another weight limit.

- Keep your child in the full harness until the upper weight limit for the harness has been reached (read the label on the seat).

Remember!

- When properly installed, the seat should not move more than 1 inch side to side or front to back at the designated seat belt path on the car seat.
- The safest place for your child is in the middle of the back seat.
- Visit NortonChildrens.com/CarSeatSafety for more information and for options to have your car seat inspected by a certified technician.