

Forward-Facing Car Seats: What You Need to Know

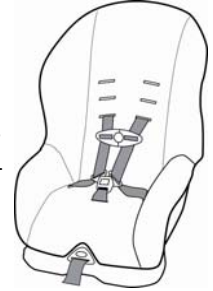


5 Quick Facts

- 1) Never turn your child forward-facing before one year **and** 20 pounds. It is safer to be rear-facing.
- 2) Make certain your child stays within the height and weight requirements of the car seat.
- 3) Harnesses must be at or above a child's shoulders for forward facing car seats.
- 4) Use the seatbelt *or* the LATCH anchors to hold the seat, never use both.
- 5) If your child exceeds the height and/or the weight of the car seat, you *must* move to a bigger car seat or a booster seat.

Types of forward-facing car seats

There are two types of harnesses forward-facing car seats available—convertible seats and combination seats. **Convertible seats** are designed to be used both rear-facing and forward-facing. Height and weight limits vary for each brand and style of convertible seat. Some convertible seats also turn into belt-positioning boosters and are sometimes referred to as "3-in-1 car seats."



Forward-facing combination seats do not have the ability to be used rear-facing, however, they do convert to belt-positioning boosters. The height and weight limits vary, again, based on the brand and style of seat. Most combination seats also have a *minimum* height and weight limit for a child to use the seat. Some seats may not fit very young or small children.

Using your forward-facing car seat

Your forward-facing car seat needs to be installed upright with either the LATCH or seatbelt and if possible, using the top Tether as well. When securing your child into the seat, some basic guidelines apply to all seats.

- Harnesses must be at or above your child's shoulders.
- Retainer clip is placed at arm pit level.
- Harnesses should be tight enough so that you can only slide one finger underneath the strap at the collar bone.
- If the top of your child's ears are above the back of the car seat, or his shoulders are above the top slots, you must move to a bigger car seat, or booster seat.

The right car seat for your child is the one that fits your child, you can use correctly, and fits your vehicle.

Macomb County Health Department offers FREE car seat inspections.

Call for an appointment (586) 412-3398 or visit us on the web at:

<http://www.macombcountymi.gov/publichealth/hpdc/childpassengersafety.htm>