



Rear-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 leave your child rear-facing longer than the one year guideline.
- 2) Make certain your child stays within the height and weight requirements of the car seat.
- 3) Rear-facing car seats should be reclined between 30-45 degrees.
- 4) Use the seatbelt or the LATCH anchors to hold the seat, never use both.
- 5) If you need to recline the car seat, use pool noodles, rolled up towels, foam inserts or rolled up newspapers. Do not use anything hard—it can become a flying object in a crash.

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>

Types of rear-facing car seats

For newborns and children under one year of age, there are two basic styles of rear-facing car seats, infant carriers and convertible seats. Most parents opt for an **infant carrier car seat**. An infant carriers typically has a base that stays in the vehicle at all times and the carrier snaps in and out for convenience. Infant carriers have minimum and maximum weight and height requirements. Your child must fit within these requirements to safely use the seat. Infant carriers can only be used rear-facing. Certain brands and styles of infant carriers can be used without a base if necessary.



Convertible car seats stay in the vehicle and do not have removable carrier. They are designed to hold children as small as 5 pounds and generally have an upper weight limit of 30-35 pounds. Convertible car seats can also be turned around to a forward-facing position when needed.

Using your car seat

When you are placing your child in a rear-facing car seat, some basic guidelines apply.

- Always have the harness straps at or below the shoulders.
- The retainer clip is placed at arm pit level.
- The harness straps should be snug enough so that you can only slide one finger underneath the strap at the collar bone.
- Rear-facing car seats should be reclined between a 30—45 degrees.