

# 10 Child Passenger Safety Tips for Families

## 1. Choose the right car seat.

Your child needs the right car seat for their age and size to protect them during a crash. They will need different seats as they grow. When your child reaches the maximum height or weight for their current seat, they need a new one. Each age uses a different kind of seat:



### Infants and toddlers:

Children under 2 years old need a rear-facing car seat (i.e., they sit so they are looking toward the back of the vehicle). Some rear-facing seats are made only for infants. Babies often outgrow them at around 8 or 9 months old. Children can then ride in rear-facing car seats made for older infants and toddlers.



### Younger children:

Forward-facing seats are best for younger children between 2 and 4 years old. They can also use convertible or all-in-one seats that can be changed from a rear-facing seat into a front-facing or booster seat as your child grows.



### Older children:

Booster seats are for older children who have outgrown forward-facing seats but are not big enough to use a seat belt. Seat belts are made for adults. Most children under 11 years old need a booster seat to safely use a seat belt.

## 2. Register your child's car or booster seat

Register with the company that made your child's car or booster seat. The company will let you know if there is a safety notice or product recall of the seat your child is using.



## 3. Make sure you install the car or booster seat correctly.

Use the vehicle's seat belt or the LATCH (lower anchors and tethers for children) system to install the seat. Both ways are safe; you only need to use one of them. Check the seat's directions in the manual or online. A certified child passenger safety technician (CPST) can help you make sure the car seat is installed correctly. [Find someone to check your seat](#) by searching online or attending a local safety event.

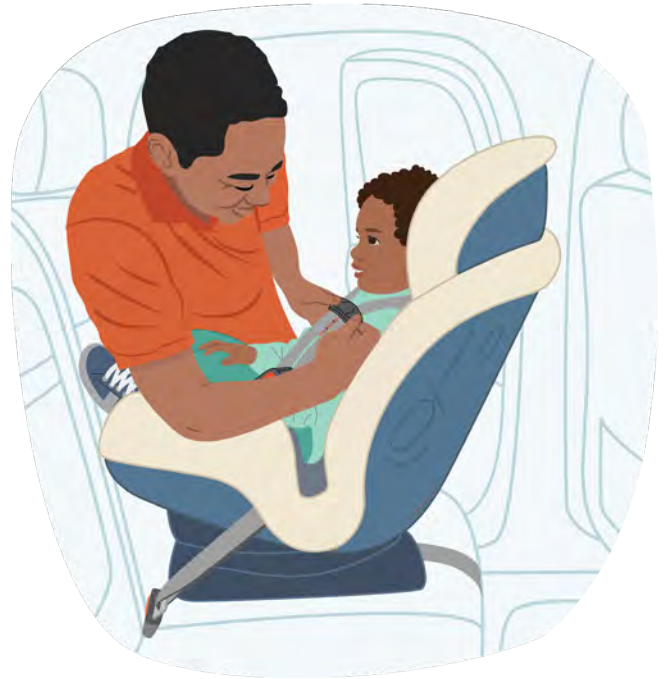


**4. Always place your child's car or booster seat in the back seat of the vehicle.**

Until children are 13 years old, the back seat is the safest place for them to sit.

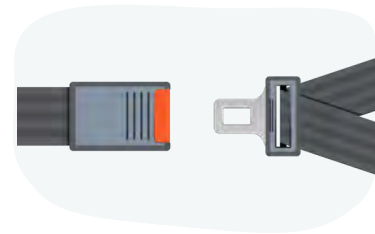
**5. Use a car or booster seat every time.**

Use a car or booster seat every time your child rides in a vehicle, even on short trips. Most car crashes happen close to home.



**6. Buckle up!**

Children are more likely to use their seat belt when you are too. Wearing a seat belt in a vehicle is also the best way for a pregnant woman or pregnant person to protect themselves and their baby from injury.



**7. Stay focused when you drive.**

Texting and other distractions increase the risk of a crash.



## 8. Keep children safe in and around the car.

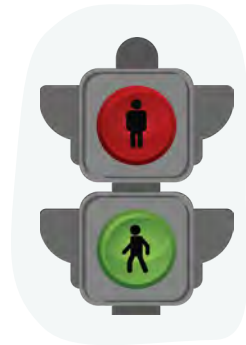
Avoid injury risks.

- **Vehicle back-over:** Watch children closely when they are in or around a vehicle. Always check behind your vehicle before backing up.
- **Vehicle roll-away:** Keep vehicles locked when they aren't used. Never leave the keys where a child can get to them.
- **Trunk entrapment:** Teach children that it is not safe to play in a vehicle. Lock the trunk so children do not get trapped inside.

## 9. Teach children how to be safe on foot.

Teach children how to be safe by avoiding moving cars and crossing the street safely with an adult. Teach them to:

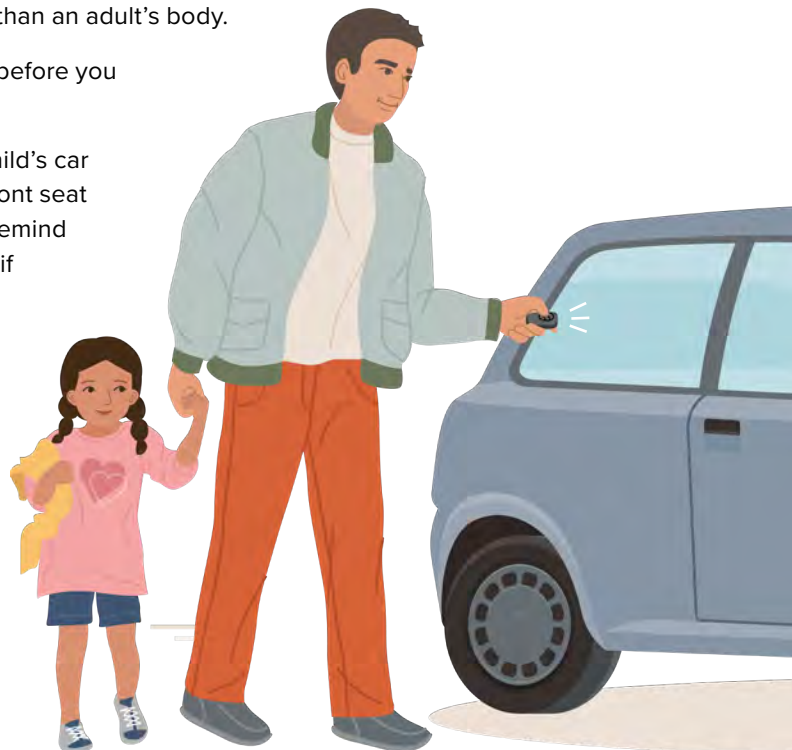
- Recognize the colors in a traffic light and what they mean.
- Hold an adult's hand and look both ways before they cross the street.
- Never run into the street after a ball or toy.



## 10. Prevent heatstroke.

Look before you lock:

- Leaving a child in a car, even for a minute, is never safe.
- A child can overheat even with the windows rolled down or on a cloudy day.
- A child's body can overheat five times faster than an adult's body.
- Always check the back seats of your vehicle before you lock it and walk away.
- Keep a stuffed animal or other item in your child's car seat when it is empty. Move the item to the front seat when your child is in their car seat. This can remind you that your child is riding in the back, even if they are sleeping or quiet.
- If someone else is driving your child, or your daily routine changes, always check to make sure your child has arrived safely.



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