



Governor's Traffic
Safety Committee



Keeping Children Safer

ON THE ROAD IN NEW YORK

VISUAL CAR SEAT GUIDE

Always check your vehicle and car seat manufacturers' instructions to be sure your child's car seat is installed and used correctly.

FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



Hello Parents and Caregivers:

Congratulations on your careful attention to your child's car seat. This Visual Guide is designed to supplement your vehicle and car seat manufacturers' instructions.

Always check your vehicle and car seat manufacturers' instructions to be sure your child's car seat is installed and used correctly.

Each car seat stage offers less protection than the previous stage. Keep your child at each stage as long as possible, until your child reaches the maximum height or weight allowed in the car seat instructions. Your child is safer that way. The recommended place to install a single car seat is in the back seat. Install the seat in the center back, if available.

Effective November 1, 2019, New York State law states that all children under the age of 2 must use a rear-facing car seat. If the child has outgrown an infant seat, it is recommended that a larger, rear-facing convertible or all-in-one car seat with higher rear-facing height and weight limits be used. These seats should be installed in the rear-facing position until the child reaches the rear-facing weight or height limit set by the car seat manufacturer.

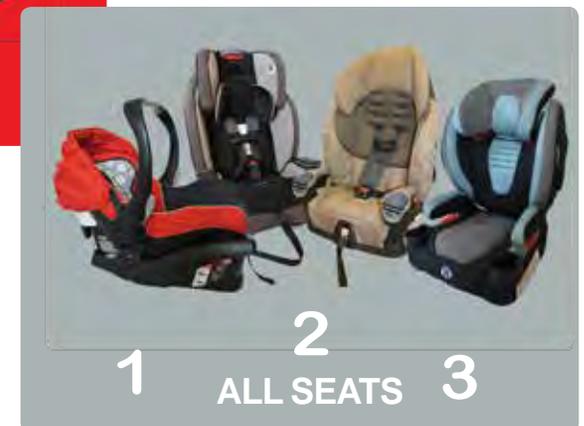
The car seat stages are color coded throughout this Guide.

1) Rear-facing has a blue background; 2) Forward-facing has a green background; 3) Boosters have a red background; 4) General information for more than one type of seat has a gray background.

Be sure to attend a car seat checkup or fitting station to confirm that your child is in the right seat and that the seat is installed and used correctly. To find one near you, visit <https://safeny.ny.gov/child-passenger-safety-parents-caregivers>.

Keeping kids safer,

The New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee



SEAT SELECTION

Important: Keep your child at each stage up to the maximum height or weight allowed in the car seat manufacturer's instructions.

REAR-FACING, CONVERTIBLE OR ALL-IN-ONE SEAT



Keep children rear-facing until at least age 2. If a child outgrows a rear-facing seat before their 2nd birthday, then a convertible or all-in-one seat with higher rear-facing height and weight limits should be used. These seats should be installed in the rear-facing position.

CONVERTIBLE, FORWARD-FACING, OR ALL-IN-ONE SEAT WITH 5-POINT HARNESS



When your child outgrows the rear-facing height or weight limits, use a forward-facing seat with a harness and tether.

BELT-POSITIONING BOOSTER

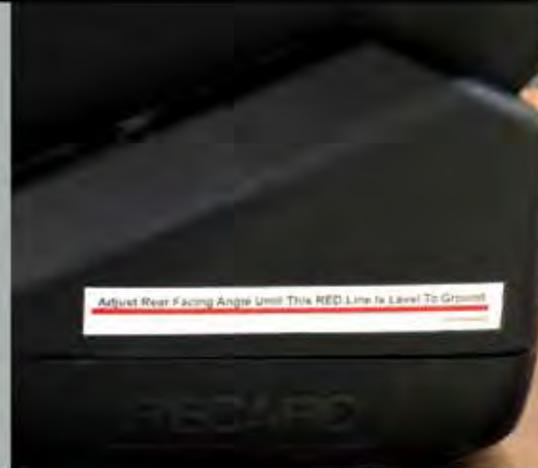


When your child outgrows the height or weight limits of the forward-facing seat with the harness, use a belt-positioning booster. Your child should ride in a booster until the adult seat belts fit correctly (see page 14).

RECLINE INDICATORS

Most rear-facing car seats have recline indicators. Park your car on level ground before checking the car seat recline angle. For infants and children with limited head/neck control, make sure their heads do not flop forward, which restricts their airways.

All seats need to be installed at the angle(s) in the car seat instructions. Here are examples of recline indicators.



Most car seats have angle adjusters built in. If the car seat instructions allow it, you can use a noodle, towel, or rolled blanket to level the seat.



CAR SEAT INSTALLATION USING SEAT BELT

Every car seat is different. All seats have belt paths that seat belts or LATCH straps follow in order to be installed correctly.



Lower Anchors and Tether for Children (LATCH)

All types of seats can have LATCH attachments. LATCH can be used instead of a seat belt to install a car seat. Use the tether when car seats are forward-facing if your vehicle has a tether anchor available.*

LOWER ANCHOR ATTACHMENTS



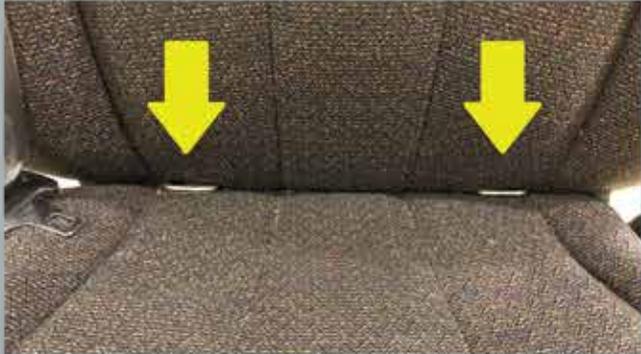
TETHER



*Most vehicles manufactured after 9/2002 are required to have LATCH. Check your vehicle owner's manual for the location of the lower anchors and tether anchors. Check your car seat and vehicle manuals for the maximum weight a child can be to use the lower anchors.

Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children (LATCH)

Lower Anchors



Tether Anchors



THE TETHER STRAP AND TETHER ANCHOR SHOULD BE USED WITH FORWARD-FACING SEATS, IF THEY ARE AVAILABLE.*

*Beginning with the year 2000, tether anchors are required in most passenger vehicles.

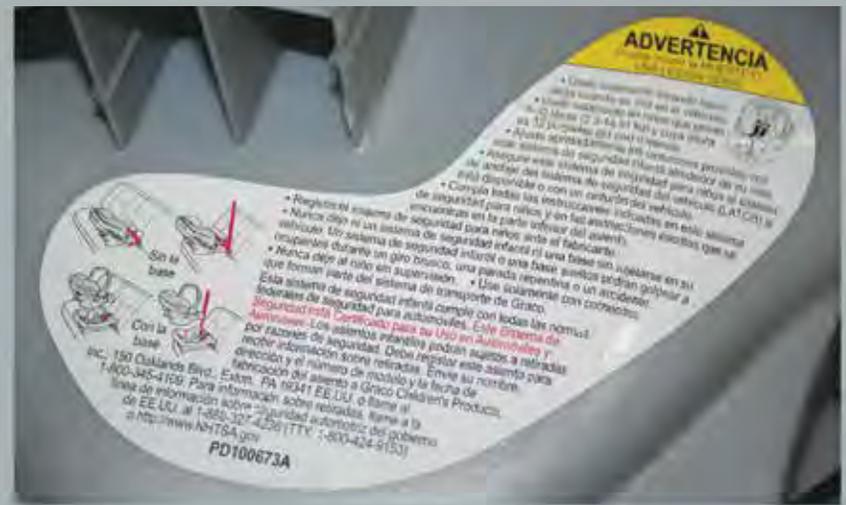
SEAT TIGHTNESS AT BELT PATH

When pulling the seat side to side and front to back at the belt path of seat, the movement should be no more than 1 inch.



LABELS

REMEMBER: Every car seat is different. ALWAYS check the label on your car seat. ALWAYS read the car seat manual to learn how to install and use the car seat correctly.

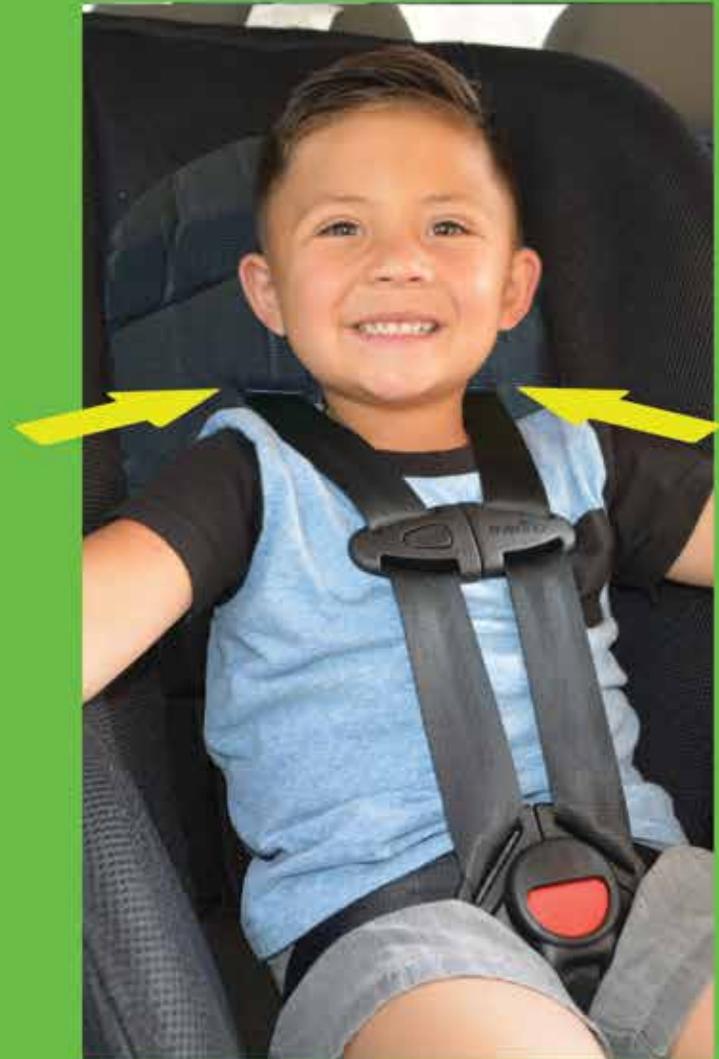


HARNESSES

Rear-facing seats: harness height must be AT or BELOW the shoulders.



Forward-facing seats: harness height must be AT or ABOVE the shoulders.



HARNESSES

To adjust the harness so it is at the correct height for your child, check your car seat owner's manual. Different car seats have different ways of moving the harness to the correct slot.



NOTE: Some manufacturers provide videos on the Internet that show how to properly adjust the harness height for their specific car seats.

Harness must be tight enough so you cannot pinch the strap.



Harness clip should be at the same level as child's armpits.



REAR-FACING EXAMPLES



FORWARD-FACING WITH HARNESS EXAMPLES

YES

CORRECT



NO

INCORRECT



YES

CORRECT



NO

INCORRECT



BOOSTER SEAT EXAMPLES

Make sure the lap belt is snug and flat on your child's thighs. Make sure the shoulder belt crosses the center of the child's chest and goes under the booster seat arm (on left). Do not let your child put the belt behind his or her back.

IS YOUR CHILD READY TO RIDE ON THE VEHICLE SEAT? CHECK THE SEAT BELT FIT

Have your child sit with his/her hips against the back of the vehicle seat. Then answer the four questions below.

1. Do your child's knees bend comfortably over the edge of the seat?
2. Is the lap belt low on the hips, touching the top of your child's legs?
3. Does the shoulder belt cross the center of your child's shoulder and chest?
4. Can your child sit like this for the entire trip?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, your child needs to keep using a booster.



Adult Seat Belts Proper Fit



Keep Your Child in a Booster if the Seat Belts Alone Do Not Fit



NO THICK CLOTHES

INCORRECT



ONLY THIN CLOTHES

CORRECT



If an item did not come with the seat, DO NOT USE IT.

INCORRECT





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TO FIND A CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTION STATION IN YOUR AREA, PLEASE VISIT
[HTTP://SAFENY.NY.GOV/SEAT-PER.HTM](http://safeny.ny.gov/seat-per.htm)

For additional copies of this Guide, please call
1-877-669-7233, ext. 206, or visit www.imsafe.com.

