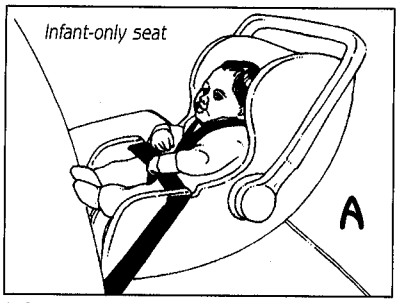
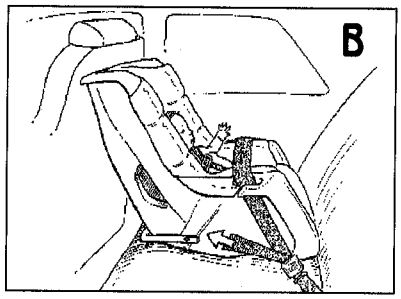
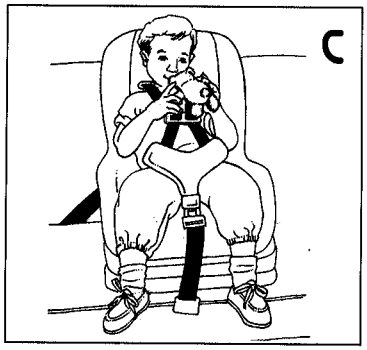
Tip #1
quick safety seat checkup



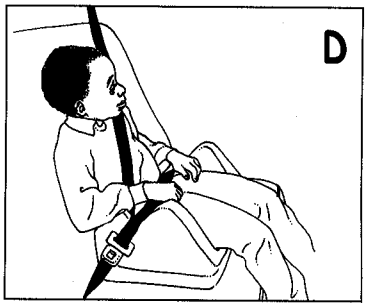
Infants under 1 year and less than 20 lbs. face rear only.



Infants less than 1 year, over 20 lbs. ride in a seat approved for heavier infants rear facing.



Child over age 1 and at least 20 lbs faces the front.



Belt-positioning booster is used with both lap and shoulder belts.

Auto booster seats are for children who have outgrown safety seats, at about 40 pounds.

Does your child ride in the back seat?

- The back seat is generally the safest place in a crash.
- If your vehicle has a passenger air bag, it is essential for children 12 and under to ride in back.

Does your child ride facing the right way?

- Infants should ride in rear facing restraints, preferably in the back seat, until about age 1 and at least 20-22 lbs (**A**). Infants who weigh 20 lbs. before 1 year of age should ride in a restraint approved for higher rear facing weights (**B**). Always read your child restraint owner manual for instructions on properly using the restraint.
- Children over age one and at least 20 pounds may ride facing forward (**C**).

Does the safety belt hold the seat tightly in place?

- Put the belt through the right slot. If your safety seat can be used facing either way, use the correct belt slots for each direction.
- The safety belt must stay tight when securing the safety seat. Check the vehicle owner's manual for tips on using the safety belts.

Is the harness buckled snugly around your child?

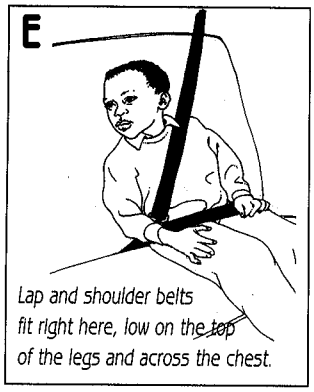
- Keep the straps over your child's shoulder. The harness should be adjusted so you can slip only one finger underneath the straps at your child's chest. Place the chest clip at armpit level.

Does your child over 40 pounds have the best protection possible?

- Keep your child in a safety seat with a full harness as long as possible, at least until 40 pounds (**C**). Then use a belt-positioning booster seat which helps the adult lap and shoulder belt fit better.
- A belt-positioning booster seat is preferred for children between 40-80 pounds (**D**). It is used with the adult lap and shoulder belt. Check on special products for heavy children too active to sit still in a booster.

How should a safety belt fit an older child?

- The child must be tall enough to sit without slouching, with knees bent at the edge of the seat, with feet on the floor. The lap belt must fit low and tight across the upper thighs. The shoulder belt should rest over the shoulder and across the chest (**E**). Never put the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the child's back. The adult lap and shoulder belt system alone will not fit most children until they are at least 4'9" tall and weigh about 80 pounds.



Lap and shoulder belts fit right here, low on the ~~top~~ of the legs and across the chest.

For more information, read Child Auto Safety Tips #2 to #9 and call your local safety group or the DOT Auto Safety Hotline: 1-888-DASH-2-DOT.

Even the "safest" seat may not protect your child if it isn't used correctly.

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