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Keep — kids safe

FORWARD-FACING SEATS

STAGE

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Forward-facing car seats are for older children with stronger back and neck muscles. As long as your child fits within the weight and height ranges of his or her rear-facing car seat and fits the car seat properly, it is best to keep your child rear-facing as long as possible.

INSTALL YOUR FORWARD-FACING SEAT

Always install the forward-facing seat in the back seat of your vehicle. This way, your child is as far away as possible from the front air bags if they inflate during a crash. A forward-facing car seat must be tightly installed with the UAS or vehicle belt routed through the appropriate spot in the car seat **AND** the tether strap attached to your vehicle's tether anchor in order to protect your child in a crash or sudden stop. Read your **car owner's manual** and the **car seat user guide** to learn how to install the child seat the right way.

If you cannot find complete instructions in these manuals, and your child weighs 18kg (40 lb) or more, we recommend you install the child car seat using **both** the UAS (if equipped) and vehicle seat belt, **together with** the top tether anchor when your child seat is installed forward-facing.

STEP ONE: ATTACH UAS OR SEAT BELT


Choose the option that keeps the child seat as tightly secured as possible.



OPTION 1: UAS

Use the Universal Anchorage System (UAS), if you have it in your car. Your vehicle owner's manual will show you where to find the anchors.

Important: Vehicle and car seat manufacturers have guidelines regarding the maximum weight of child that the UAS may be used for. Consult your vehicle and car seat manufacturer instructions for more information on this limit. If no guidance is available from your vehicle or car seat manufacturer, install your seat using the the UAS and vehicle belt and tether once your child reaches 18 kg (40 lbs).

In most vehicles, this symbol  shows you where to find your car's UAS anchor bars. It also shows you where the connectors are on your new child seat.



OPTION 2: SEAT BELT ONLY

Use this option if your seat belts or car seat have a built-in locking feature. Check your vehicle owner's manual and your car seat user guide to see how to lock the seat belt correctly.



OPTION 3: SEAT BELT + LOCKING CLIP

Use this option if your seat belts and car seat do not have a locking feature. Check both your vehicle owner's manual and car seat user guide to see how to use the locking clip.

TIP: Putting pressure in the car seat with either a knee or your hand prior to tightening the vehicle belt or UAS strap will make it easier to get a tight installation.

IMPORTANT TIPS

- Always consult your vehicle owner's manual and car seat user guide prior to installation.
- If you are using the UAS, make sure you do not exceed the maximum weight limits indicated in the vehicle owner's manual and car seat user guide or labels.
- If you cannot find complete instructions in these manuals, and your child weighs 18kg (40 lb) or more, we recommend you install the child car seat using **both** the UAS (if equipped) and vehicle seat belt, **together with** the top tether anchor when your child seat is installed forward-facing.
- Ensure the car seat is at the recline position recommended by the manufacturer.
- Items that did not come with your new child seat (such as liners, trays or comfort straps) may not be safe to use. Contact the car seat manufacturer and ask if these items are safe to use with your new car seat.
- Leave as much space as possible between the car seat and the front seat of your vehicle.

HOW TO INSTALL FORWARD-FACING SEATS

STEP TWO: ATTACH TETHER

Always use the tether strap with forward-facing car seats. Your vehicle owner's manual will show you where to find the tether anchors.

Route the tether strap according to the vehicle manufacturer's instructions, and attach the tether hook to the tether anchor. Be careful to not twist the tether strap unless otherwise directed.

Once you've attached the tether, remove any slack.



IMPORTANT TIPS

- Don't let anything get in the way of the tether strap.
- Your vehicle manual will tell you how to route the tether strap if your vehicle has headrests in the position you are installing your car seat. Always follow your vehicle and car seat manufacturer's instructions when routing the tether strap.

CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOUR FORWARD-FACING CHILD SEAT IS INSTALLED CORRECTLY AND TIGHTLY.

Once installed, hold both sides of the car seat (grab it where the seat belt or UAS belt is threaded through the car seat). Try to move the car seat in all directions. **The car seat should not move more than 2.5 cm (1 inch) in any direction.**



BUCKLING UP YOUR CHILD



HEAD

Make sure there is enough space between the top of your child's head and the top of the car seat; every seat is different. Check your car seat user guide to know how much space is required.

SHOULDERS

Make sure the harness straps are snug on your child's shoulders. Slide a finger under the harness at the collarbone and pull gently up/out. Attempt to pinch the webbing of the harness with the thumb and forefinger. If you are unable to pinch the harness, then it is sufficiently tight

CHEST

Make sure the chest clip is at your child's armpit level and closed properly.

HEIGHT ADJUSTMENT

Make sure the harness straps are at or just above your child's shoulders.



When should you move your child from a forward-facing car seat to a booster seat?

Keep your child in the forward-facing seat until he or she grows out of it. A forward-facing car seat spreads the force of a sudden stop or crash over the strongest parts of your child's body. Your car seat user guide will tell you the weight and height limits of a child for that car seat. If your child grows out of their forward-facing seat before they are ready for a booster, there may be another forward-facing seat that fits your child. There are forward-facing car seats that are made for children up to 30 kg (65 lbs)!

Even if your child weighs more than 18 kg (40 lbs) and your provincial/territorial law says you can use a booster seat, your child is safer in the forward-facing car seat as long as he or she is still below the car seat's weight and height limits and fits in the car seat correctly.

IMPORTANT TIPS

- By law, children must be buckled up in a car seat made for their weight and height. Read your provincial/territorial regulations for details.
- Many car seats are not installed correctly. If you are not sure that you have installed your car seat correctly, there may be a car seat clinic in your community that can help.
- Do not leave loose items in your vehicle during a trip, as they may hit and hurt someone in a sudden stop.
- When using bulky winter clothing, make sure that the harness system is tight, compressing the material for a snug fit. Check with the car seat manufacturer for alternative methods of clothing during the winter.
- It is important to make sure the harness system remains snug when you switch your child from winter clothing back to slimmer, summer clothing.

WHEN TO REPLACE A CHILD SEAT

- Car seats have expiry dates, so make sure you replace and dispose of yours when it expires.
- Always replace and dispose of a car seat that was in a vehicle that was involved in a collision. Even if the car seat was empty, it may have been damaged.
- Contact the manufacturer to check whether you should replace the seat if the shell or webbing of the seat are torn or damaged

If you need more information on road safety, please contact us by email at mvs-sa@tc.gc.ca or call toll free 1-800-333-0371 (Ottawa area 613-998-8616).