



Choose the right car seat:

With the school year fast approaching, many parents may choose to drive their children to school. Using the right child car seat is the best way to prevent serious injury to children in collisions. When you buy a child car seat for use in Canada, look for the National Safety Mark label attached to the seat.

This label indicates that the seat complies with Canadian regulations and standards and is legal for use in Canada.



Every child car seat and booster seat sold in Canada has an expiry/useful life date. If in an accident, the car seat must be removed and not used again. It's best to buy a child car seat new. If you're thinking about buying or using a pre-owned child car seat, check it carefully. Make sure it:

- Meets the latest Transport Canada Guidelines and the requirements of Health Canada's [Consumer Product Safety Act](#).
- Meets Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and displays a National Safety Mark. This tells you that the car seat met all safety standards in place when it was made.
- Has its instructions and all necessary hardware.
- Has never been in a collision.
- Has not expired or exceeded its useful life date as determined by the manufacturer.
- Has no signs of wear, including discoloration, stress marks or cracks, or worn or torn harness straps.

If a child car seat doesn't appear to be in good condition, don't buy or use it.

Child car seats for toddlers:

Ontario's *Highway Traffic Act* allows children weighing 9 kg to 18 kg (20 to 40 lb.) to use a forward-facing child car seat or a rear-facing car seat as long as the car seat manufacturer recommends its use.

It's best to keep your child in a forward-facing child car seat until they reach the manufacturer's recommended maximum weight and height limits. A forward-facing car seat uses a tether strap to prevent the child car seat from moving forward and causing injury in a collision. It is important to use the tether strap exactly as the manufacturer recommends.

Booster seats:

Booster seats raise children so adult seat belts protect them better. Booster seats protect children from serious injury 3-½ times better than seat belts alone.

Ontario's *Highway Traffic Act* requires children weighing 18 kg to 36 kg (40 to 80 lb.), standing less than 145 cm (4 ft. 9 in.) tall and who are under the age of 8 to use a booster seat or allows the continued use of a forward-facing seat as long as the car seat manufacturer recommends its use. It's best to keep your child in a booster seat until they reach the manufacturer's recommended maximum weight and height limits.

Seatbelts:

Seatbelts are designed for adults and older children. Children may be ready to move from a booster seat to a vehicle's seatbelt once:

they can sit all the way against the back of the vehicle seat with legs bent comfortably over the edge and maintain this position for the entire trip

they can have the shoulder belt flat across the shoulder and chest

the lap belt crosses over the hips, not the stomach

Ontario's *Highway Traffic Act* allows a child to use a seatbelt alone when any one of the following occurs:

Child turns 8 years old, or

Child weighs 36 kg (80 lb.), or

Child is 145 cm (4 ft. 9 in.) tall or more

All drivers are responsible for ensuring that passengers under 16 are secured properly.