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Make sure your child is in a properly installed and correct size car seat.



Stage 1

Rear-facing seats

All infants and toddlers should ride in a **rear-facing car seat** until they are 2 years old, or until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their car seat's manufacturer.

Stage 2

Convertible or forward-facing seat

Any child 2 or older who has outgrown the rear-facing weight or height limit for a car seat should use a **forward-facing car seat** with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by their car seat's manufacturer. This also applies to any child younger than 2 years who has outgrown the rear-facing weight or height limit of their seat.



Stage 3

Forward-facing or booster seat

Children whose weight or height exceeds the limit for a forward-facing car seat should switch to a **belt-positioning booster seat**. These children should remain in a booster seat until the vehicle seat belt fits properly, typically when they reach 4 feet 9 inches in height and are between 8 and 12 years of age.

Stage 4

Seat belts

When children are old enough and large enough to use the vehicle seat belt alone, they should always use **lap and shoulder seat belts** for optimal protection. Lap portion should be low over the hips/tops of the thighs (not over the stomach) and shoulder belt should cross the center of the shoulder and center of the chest (not the neck). Children younger than 13 years old are safest in the back seat.



TxDOT

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