

# Tips for Buying Car Seats

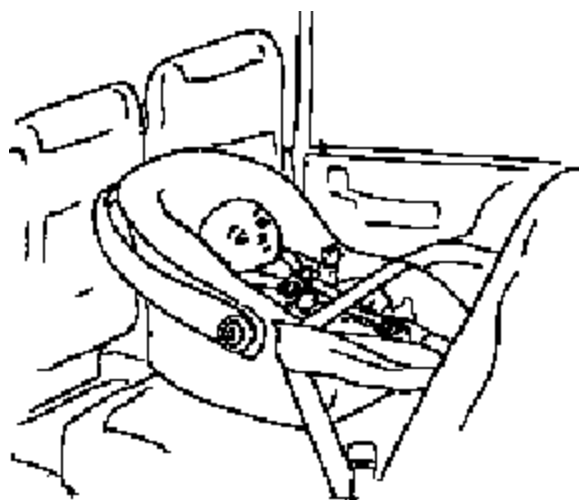
## Buying the Seat

- Once you know what type of seat is needed it's time to go shopping. Take your child with you to ensure the seat fits properly and assess how easily your child can be secured in it (refer to checklist on back page).
- Try the car seat in your vehicle. If it does not fit in your vehicle, return it and buy another one. Not all car seats are compatible with vehicle seats and their seat belt system.
- Send in the warranty card. The manufacturer can then directly contact you if there is a recall.
- Read the instruction manual. Know everything there is to know about your child's car seat.
- It is not recommended to buy used car seats because you do not know the history of the car seat. The car seat may have been in a crash and there is no way to determine whether it will adequately protect your child in a future collision.
- Do not place your child in a used car seat if:
  - the car seat has been in a crash
  - the car seat is more than 10 years old
  - any of the straps are frayed or torn
  - there are any cracks in the plastic shell
  - the tubular frame is bent or rusted at the rivet points
  - the tether anchorage hardware is missing or incomplete on the forward facing seats
- Visit a car seat clinic in your area to check the installation of your child's car seat.

## Type of Car Seat Needed

The child's age, weight and height will determine the type of seat needed as well as when to progress to the next stage.

Stage 1: Rear-facing Seat Age: Use from birth to one year	Weight Limits <i>Infant Seat:</i> use from birth to 9 or 10 kg (20-22 lb) <i>Convertible Seat:</i> use up to 16 kg (35 lb). Use the convertible seat (in the rear-facing position) if the baby is heavier than the weight limit of the infant seat but is less than one year old.
Stage 2: Forward-facing Seat Age: Use from about age one to four years	Weight Limits Use with a tether up to 18 kg (40 lb) Types of Forward-Facing Seats <i>Forward-Facing:</i> can only be used forward-facing <i>Convertible Seat:</i> converts from a rear-facing to a forward facing seat <i>Combination Seat:</i> converts from a forward-facing to a booster seat. Some combination seats may go up to 22 kg (48 lb) forward-facing.
Stage 3: Booster Seat Age: Use from about age four to eight years	Weight Limits Use from 18 kg (40 lb) up to 45 kg (100 lb) without harnesses. Combination seats used as booster seats use the vehicle's seat belt instead of the child car seat harness to restrain the child.
Stage 4: Seat Belt Age: 8 years and older	Use adult seat belt when more than 36 kg (80 lb). A lap/shoulder belt is the safest.



- All car seats sold in stores in Canada are safe for use in Canada. The different styles are a result of manufacturer differences and parental preferences.
- Make sure the car seat is approved by the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (CVMSS). All car seats sold in stores meet this standard.



Saskatchewan Institute on  
Prevention of Handicaps  
Our Goal is Healthy Children

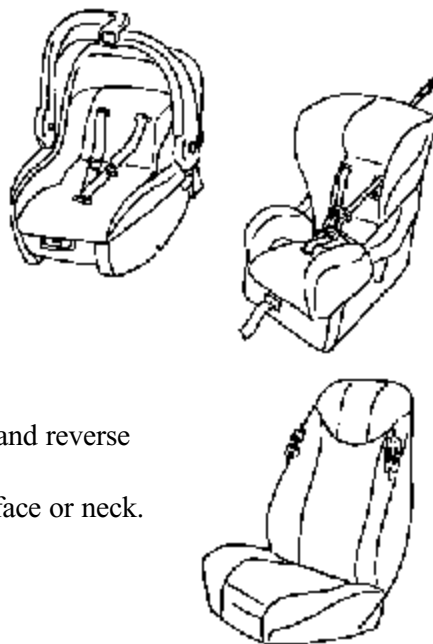
## Ease of Use Checklist

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and your vehicle owner's manual for correct installation instructions.

### All Seats

Yes No

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Meets all current CMVSS standards (It's the law). A CMVSS label is attached.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Assembly required.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Manufacturer's instructions and warranty card with seat.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has clear instructions and illustrations.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Seat belt routing clearly indicated on child seat.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | At least two sets of usable harness slots (for growing child).<br>Note: Only top slots can be used in most convertible child seats when used in the forward-facing position. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Easy to change harness slot positions.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Easy to tighten and loosen harness.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Easy to secure and release harness buckle. (Try it in the correct and reverse buckle position - when the buckle is inserted back to front.)                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | If the seat has a T-shield, the T-shield does not lie on the child's face or neck.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 80% of the child seat base fits on the vehicle seat.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Seat belt can be threaded through child seat with ease.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Seat belt can be tightened to secure child seat in vehicle seat.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has LATCH attachments (if your vehicle is LATCH friendly).   |



### Infant Seats

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has two crotch strap positions or a crotch strap close to the seat back for a good, secure fit.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The carrying handle can be lowered (stored) properly while in the vehicle.                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | If the seat has a base, it is easy to attach and remove the seat from the base while it is in the vehicle. |

### Forward-facing Seats

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Takes just one pull to tighten the tether strap.<br><i>If the child seat has an overhead shield, make sure:</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The shield fits over the head of a taller child.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | There is no gap between the child's chest and the harness.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The vehicle roof height allows shield to be lifted.   |

### Booster Seat

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The seat base is high enough to ensure the seat belt fits the child correctly.                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The vehicle has a shoulder/lap seat belt so that a booster without a shield can be used. This is safest. |

**NEVER place a rear-facing seat in front of an air bag. Remember, the safest place for any child is in the back seat.**

*Checklist Source: ICBC*

For more information, contact:



Saskatchewan Institute on  
Prevention of Handicaps

[www.PreventionInstitute.sk.ca](http://www.PreventionInstitute.sk.ca)  
1319 Colony Street • Saskatoon, SK • S7N 2Z1  
Phone: (306) 655-2512 • Fax: (306) 655-2511  
*Our Goal is Healthy Children*