

CAR SEAT SAFETY TIPS

Fremont Police Dept has trained and certified volunteers who do complimentary car seat inspections by appointment only. To make an appointment please call (510) 468-8699.

From birth to at least age 1 and 20 pounds:

- Use a rear-facing car seat correctly in a back seat every time your baby rides in a car.
- Use the right car seat for your baby's weight and height. Infants are weighed and measured at every doctor visit, so be sure to keep track.
- Use the car's safety belt or LATCH system to lock the car seat into the car. Your car seat should not move more than one inch side to side or front to back. Grab the car seat at the safety belt path or LATCH path to test it.
- Put harnesses through the slots so they are even with or below the infant's shoulders. Be sure the harness is tight, so you can't pinch extra webbing at the shoulder.
- Adjust the chest clip to armpit level.
- Use your baby's car seat rear-facing and reclined no more than 45 degrees, so the baby's head stays in contact with the seat and the baby's airway stays open. Read the car seat instructions.
- Keep your baby rear-facing until at least age 1 and 20 pounds. Use a rear-facing convertible seat longer if the seat has higher weight and height limits.
- Find where the frontal airbags are in your vehicle by checking the owner's manual. Never put a rear-facing car seat in front of an active airbag.
- Be sure all occupants wear safety belts correctly every time. Children learn from adult role models.

Older than age 1 and more than 20 pounds:

- Use a forward-facing car seat correctly in a back seat every time your toddler rides in a car.
- Use the right car seat with a harness for your toddler's weight and height. Toddlers are weighed and measured at every doctor visit, so be sure to keep track.
- Use the car's safety belt or LATCH system to lock the car seat into the car. Your car seat should not move more than one inch side to side or front to back. Grab the car seat at the safety belt path or LATCH path to test it.
- Put harnesses through the slots so they are even with or above the child's shoulders. Some seats require use of the top slots when the seat is forward-facing, so check instructions.
- Be sure the harness is tight, so you can't pinch extra webbing at the shoulder.
- Use a top tether if your vehicle and car seat are both so equipped. Tethers limit the forward motion of your child's head in a crash. If you don't have them, contact your car dealer and car seat manufacturer.
- Adjust the chest clip to armpit level.
- A child is too big for the seat when the shoulders are above the top slots, the tops of the ears are above the back of the seat or the weight limit is exceeded. Move to a taller car seat or a booster seat. Many children will outgrow the harness of a forward-facing car seat at age 4 or 5.
- Be sure all occupants wear safety belts correctly every time. Children learn from adult role models.

40 to 80 or 100 pounds:

- Use a booster seat correctly in a back seat every time your child rides in a car.
- Older kids get weighed and measured less often than babies, so check your child's growth a few times a year. Use a booster seat until your child weighs between 80 and 100 pounds, is about 4 feet, 9 inches tall and can pass the Safety Belt Fit Test. For most children, that will be between ages 8 and 12.
- Tell all drivers who transport your child that booster seat use is a must when your child is in their vehicle.
- A booster seat uses no harness. It uses the vehicle's lap and shoulder belts only. Be sure the safety belt is properly buckled.
- Booster seats are not installed tightly. They sit on the vehicle seat; the child buckles the lap and shoulder belt and wears the safety belt like you do. Never use only the lap belt.
- Use the vehicle's lap and shoulder belts on every booster seat. Never place the shoulder belt under the child's arm or behind the child's back.
- Be sure all occupants wear safety belts correctly every time. Children learn from adult role models.