

Name of Child: _____ Date: _____

Car Seats for Small Infants

Every baby needs to go home from the hospital in a car seat. Even if your baby came early, or is very small, you can get a car seat or car bed that is the right size.

How to choose a car seat

Infant-only car seats work best for small babies (5 pounds or less).

Look for a seat that:

- Meets federal safety standards. If there has been a recall on the seat, make sure the problem has been fixed. To find out if your car seat has been recalled, call the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Hotline: **888-327-4236** or check the website www.safercar.gov
- Is made for a small baby. Most car seats are for babies who weigh 5 pounds or more. **Do not use them for a baby that weighs less than 5 pounds.**
- Some car seats are for a baby that weighs 4 pounds or more. **Do not use them for a baby that weighs less than 4 pounds.**
- Has all its parts and instructions.
- Has several harness slot positions.

- Measures 5-1/2 inches or less from the crotch strap to the back of the seat, and 5-6 inches or less from the bottom seat cushion to the lowest harness slot.

Take a ruler to the store with you before you buy the car seat.

How to put your baby in the car seat

1. Put your baby's bottom and back flat against the car seat.

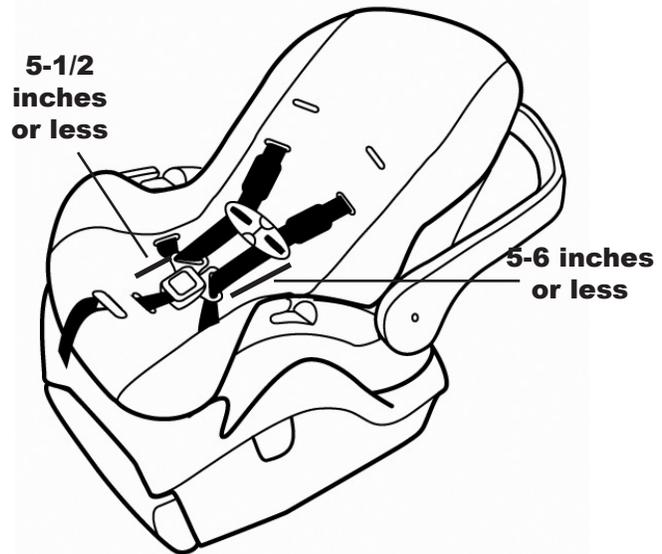
2. Use the lowest harness slot. The straps (**harness**) should be even with or below your baby's shoulders.

3. Tighten the harness. The straps should lie flat and snug against the baby. It should be snug on both shoulders. When the harness is snapped on, you should not be able to pinch extra strap at the baby's shoulder. It is not so tight that it pushes or presses into the baby's body.

4. Put the plastic clip (**retainer clip**) at the level of your baby's armpits.

5. If your car seat does not come with an insert, put a rolled blanket, towel, or diaper on each side of your baby. This will help keep your baby's head from dropping to the side.

6. If your baby slides down, put a rolled diaper, towel, or towel between the crotch strap and your baby's bottom.



How to measure a car seat



Put a rolled blanket, towel, or diaper on each side of your baby.

- Do not use car seat head supports or put any extra padding between your baby's head or back and the car seat. If it doesn't come with the car seat, do not use it. Do not buy extra padding.
 - If there is a sudden stop or crash, any loose objects can fly and hurt someone. Medical equipment must be secured in the vehicle. If possible use seatbelts to hold equipment in place. Oxygen and ventilators should be secured for safety.
 - If your baby has an apnea monitor, you can put it on the floor under the seat. Use pillows or blankets around it. Be sure it will not move around while driving.
- If your baby was born before 37 weeks or weighed less than 5 pounds at birth, before you go home, a nurse will watch your baby in a car seat for 90-120 minutes. This is called the car seat test. (Check when done.)

How to put the car seat in your vehicle

1. Call to make an appointment to learn how to put in your car seat. The Injury Prevention Center can be reached at 602-933-0960. Please call 24 hours prior to discharge. Please note that the technicians are not available on weekends or holidays.

Ask your nurse or doctor for handout #496, Child Passenger Restraint Law (Check when done.)

2. Read the child restraint section of your owner's instruction manual for your vehicle. Read the owner's instruction manual for your car seat. If you do not have the instructions:

— Know the seat's model number, name, and date it was made

— Call the company's customer service department. The phone number is on the label of the seat.

3. Make the car seat face the back of your car or truck. Arizona law says the baby must ride rear-facing until it is 1 year old and weighs at least 20 pounds. However, The American Academy of Pediatrics says your baby should ride rear-facing until he or she is 2 years old or reaches the weight limit of the convertible (toddler) seat (this is usually 30 to 40 pounds).

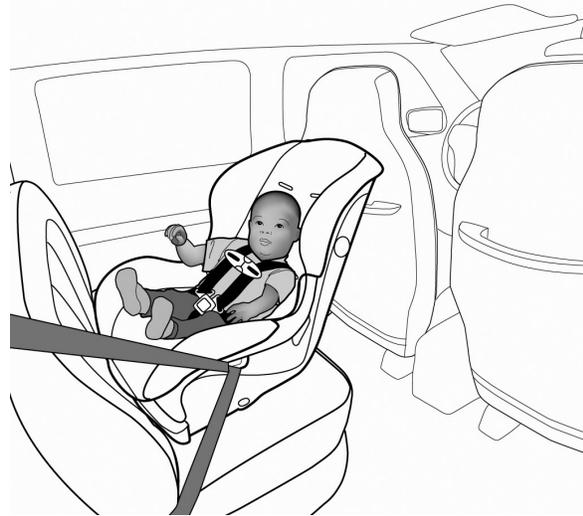
- Your baby is safest in the back seat.

Never put a car seat in the front seat unless the passenger air bag is turned off.

4. Tip the seat to a 45-degree angle. This angle will help keep your baby's head from falling forward. If your seat has a foot, use it to help get this angle. If not, use a rolled up towel or styrofoam pool noodle.

5. Read your car seat owner's manual to figure out what the position the car seat carrying handle should be in while driving.

- Your baby must stay in the seat when the vehicle is moving. If you need to feed your baby, stop the car before you take the baby out of the car seat.



The seat should sit at a 45-degree angle

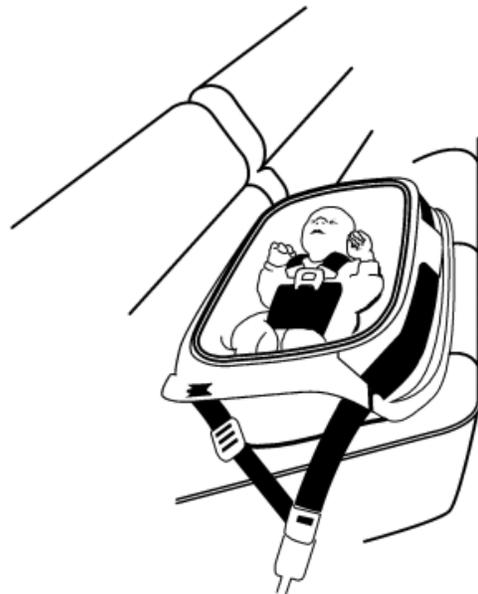
How to use a car bed

Some infants with breathing problems or other special needs must lie flat. These babies may ride in a car bed instead of a car seat.

1. Put the car bed in the back seat.
2. Put your baby's head, toward the center of the vehicle, away from the doors.
3. Use the vehicle seat belt to tighten the car bed to the car.

How should your baby ride in the car bed?

- yes no Your baby should lie on his or her tummy.
 yes no Your baby should lie on his or her back.



Use the vehicle seat belt to tighten the car bed to the car.

Now that you've read this:

- Show your nurse or doctor how you put your car seat in the car, and how you put your baby in the car seat. (Check when done.)
- Talk to your nurse or doctor about feeding your baby in the car. (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,

- call your child's doctor or call _____

If you want to know more about child health and illness,
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-933-1400
866-933-6459
www.phoenixchildrens.org
www.theemilycenter.org
Facebook: [facebook.com/theemilycenter](https://www.facebook.com/theemilycenter)
Twitter: [@emilycenter](https://twitter.com/emilycenter)
Pinterest: [pinterest.com/emilycenter](https://www.pinterest.com/emilycenter)

Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

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The Center for Injury Research and Prevention at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia



Si usted desea esta información en español, por favor pídasela a su enfermero o doctor.

#492

Car Seats for Small Infants

Name of Health Care Provider: _____

Date returned: _____ db

Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.

Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read? Yes No

easy to read? Yes No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read? Yes No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading this handout? Yes No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any questions about the subject? Yes No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes

No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

The Emily Center
Health Education Specialist
Phoenix Children's Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

602-933-1395

Thank you for helping us!