

Take the **Booster Seat YES Test**

A booster seat provides the best protection for an older child in a sudden stop or crash. An adult seat belt alone doesn't fit a child's body properly. Without a booster seat, an adult seat belt rides too high on a child's belly and neck. This can cause serious injuries to a child in a crash. A child is 3 times more likely to be hurt in a crash when using an adult seatbelt alone than when buckled in a booster seat. **Use the YES Test to help you decide when your child is ready for a booster seat, and to learn how to use one correctly.**

Who should be in a booster seat?

- When your child outgrows their forward-facing car seat with a harness by height or weight, they should move to a booster seat.
- Your child is safest in a booster seat until they reach the maximum height or weight limit of the booster seat. Find these limits on the booster seat's stickers or in the instruction manual.
- Use a booster seat until the vehicle's lap-shoulder seat belt fits properly. This is typically when your child is 145 cm (4 ft. 9 in.) tall and between 8 and 12 years of age.



Getting ready

If you answer YES to **all** of these points, your child is safest in a booster seat:

- My child has reached the maximum height or weight limit of their forward-facing car seat with a harness.
- My child is less than 145 cm (4 ft. 9 in.) tall.
- My child weighs more than 18 kg (40 lb.).

Choosing a booster seat

A booster seat can only be used with a lap-shoulder seat belt. To find the best booster seat for your child, decide where in the back seat your child will sit. Then, check to see if that seat in your vehicle has a head rest (head restraint):

- If the seat **DOES NOT have a head rest**, choose a **high back booster** to give your child head and neck support. Some car seats convert from a forward-facing car seat with a harness to a high back booster seat. Some high back booster seats have a head and neck support that can be adjusted as your child grows.
- If the seat **HAS a head rest**, choose a **high back booster** or a **backless booster** that has a seat base with arm rests. The backless booster seat works well in a vehicle seat with a head rest.



Backless booster



High back booster

Using a booster seat correctly

Use the booster seat for every ride. You're using the booster seat correctly when you can answer YES to **all** of these points:

- I've read the booster seat instructions and my vehicle owner's manual.
- My child's booster seat is in the back seat of the vehicle.
- The shoulder belt is across the centre of my child's chest and the lap belt is across my child's hips.
- I never place my child's booster seat in front of an airbag.

Moving to a seat belt

Your child is safest in a booster seat until they reach the maximum height or weight limit of the booster seat. A child is ready to ride in the vehicle without a booster seat when the vehicle seatbelt fits properly. This is typically when a child is 145 cm (4 ft. 9 in.) tall and between 8 and 12 years of age.

Children can usually use a seat belt when they are at least 145 cm (4 ft. 9 in.) tall, because:

- Their knees bend comfortably at the edge of the seat when sitting all the way back.
- The lap belt stays low and snug across their hip bones.
- The shoulder belt crosses their chest and stays between their neck and shoulder.
- They can sit like this for the whole trip without slouching.

All children under the age of 13 are safest riding in the back seat.



For more information:

- go to healthyparentshealthychildren.ca (search for car seats)
- go to myhealth.alberta.ca (search for car seats)
- call Health Link at 811

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