

Child Car Seats Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I use a child passenger car seat?

It's the law. All 50 states in United States have car passenger safety laws in one form or another. Washington's current law has been on the books since July 1, 2002. Besides, any parent wants the best for his or her child. Keeping kids safe is the best thing to do.

Can I get a ticket for not having my child in a child passenger car seat?

Yes. In Washington state, you can expect a fine of \$124 PER CHILD in your vehicle should you get pulled over and ticketed by a law enforcement officer.

My child is 8 years old and weighs about 90 pounds. Does he need to be in a child passenger car seat?

If a child is not four-feet, nine-inches tall, he or she MUST be in a child safety seat or a belt-positioning booster seat. We do recommend that children up to 80 pounds and 8 years old be in car seat, but if the child is at least 4' 9" tall, they generally are ready to use the vehicle's seat belt.

Why can't my children use the car's seat belt?

Seat belts were made with adults in mind, not children. Children less than 4' 9" tall usually will find that the lap belt rests on their stomach, not the lap, and the shoulder belt rests on their neck and not on the shoulder and across the chest. In an accident, a seat belt could severely injure or kill a child who is not big enough for the seat belt system.

I have heard that my child has a better chance of surviving a crash being thrown from the car than being trapped in it. Is this true?

This is a common belief. But think about it. After your car has come to a sudden stop after a crash, everything in the car that is not secured continues to move at the speed at which the car was moving. That means if your child was not buckled up, and you were traveling at 30 miles an hour when you suddenly slammed into that bread truck in front of you, your child would fly through the car at 30 miles an hour. If your child is 50 pounds, that is 1,500 pounds of force passing through the vehicle.

My vehicle has only lap belts. Is my older child safe?

Children and adults should use a shoulder belt to protect from injury to the head and spinal cord. If your vehicle was made prior to 1990, it may not have shoulder belts installed. Contact a local dealership or contact [vehicle manufacturers](#) on ordering retrofit kits.

I can't afford a seat, so why should I get one?

If you drive and have children, you don't have a choice. It's the law. Standard car seats range \$20 - \$150 at any department store. If you cannot afford a seat, we have a limited number of low-cost seats available. Contact us for information about how you can purchase one.