



Do I need to use a car seat for my child?

Yes. Generally, if your child is under 8 years old, they must use a car seat or booster seat.

Ontario's Highway Traffic Act requires that children use:

- rear-facing car seats until they are at least 9 kg (20 lb.)
- forward-facing child car seats when they are between 9 kg and 18 kg (20 to 40 lb.)
- a booster seat when they are between 18 kg and 36 kg (40-80 lb.), measure less than 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches), and are under the age of 8

Once a child is 8 years old, weighs 36 kg (80 lb) or measures 145 cm (4'9) they can use a seat belt without a booster or car seat.

Selecting a car seat

You will need to choose a car seat that meets the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, and is appropriate for your child's height, weight and age.

When you buy a car seat, you should be aware of the following factors:

- Make sure that the car seat hasn't passed its expiry date. Depending on the model, car seats generally last about five to eight years.
- If you are looking for a second-hand car seat, find out the history of the car seat. You should not use a car seat that's been involved in an accident.
- Make sure there are no safety recalls on the car seat before buying it and that it meets the current Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.
- You may want to avoid buying your car seat online or in the United States, as these car seats may not meet the Canadian requirements.

Installing a Car Seat

A car seat is only effective if you install it properly. Information on how to install your car seat properly can be found on the Ontario Ministry of Transportation website.

Many communities offer car seat check clinics to ensure your car seat is properly installed. Attending one of these clinics is a good idea if you are unsure how to use a car seat.

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References:

[Ontario Ministry of Transportation](#)
[Child Car Seat Clinics in Canada - Transport Canada](#)
[Keep Kids Safe - Transport Canada](#)