

Ohio Booster Seat Law



Thousands of children are injured or killed in motor vehicle crashes every year in Ohio. To help prevent these injuries and deaths, Ohio expanded its Child Passenger Safety Law to require that children be buckled in a car seat or booster seat until they are at least 8 years old or 4'9" tall.

Why are Booster Seats Needed?

- Seat belts are made for adults and do not fit young children correctly. Booster seats raise children up so the adult seat belt fits them.
- Booster seats help position the shoulder belt across the shoulder and chest, not the neck.
- Booster seats also keep the lap belt low over the hip and thigh bones, not across the belly.
- Children using booster seats are 59 percent less likely to be injured in a crash than those using a seat belt alone.

Does My Child Need a Booster Seat?

- For young children, a car seat with a harness is the safest choice.
- When your child outgrows his forward-facing car seat (often around 4 years of age and 40 pounds), he may be ready for a booster seat.
- Ohio law requires that children ride in a car seat or booster seat until they are at least 8 years old or 4'9" tall.
- For best protection, older children should ride in a booster seat until the adult seat belt fits them correctly.

Is My Child Ready for the Next Step?

If you answer "No" to any of the following questions, your child is not ready to use the adult seat belt alone and should use a booster.

- Can your child sit up straight with his back against the seat and bend his knees easily at the edge of the seat?
- Does the shoulder belt cross over his shoulder and chest and not rub against his neck?
- Is the lap belt low over his hips and thighs and not across his belly?
- Can he sit like this the whole trip?

Booster Seat Tips

- Booster seats come in 3 versions: high-back, backless and combination.
- A backless booster should only be used if you have a built-in headrest or seatback in your vehicle that reaches above your child's ears.
- Combination seats have a harness that can be used with young children, then removed for the seat to be used as a booster.
- Booster seats must never be used with only the lap belt. Do not allow a child to place the shoulder belt behind his back or under his arm.
- Children should ride in the back seat until at least 13 years of age.