

Lesson Instructions

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Suitable For: All clients.

Time Frame: Ideal in the third trimester or anytime in which a child requires a car seat.

Lesson Objective: To show a client the proper installation and use of car seats.

Instructions: Show the DVD *Simple Steps to Child Passenger Safety*. Focus on the section of the DVD that is most appropriate for the age of the client's child. Some of the information repeats through all three types of car seats, but it is valuable for review.

*** Questions to discuss with your client are bolded and italicized.**

Homework: Give her the homework sheet.

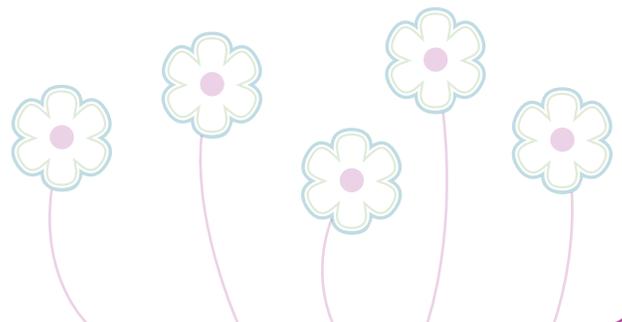
Supplies: DVD: *Simple Steps to Child Passenger Safety*

Note: You do not need to remove the master sheets from the protective plastic to copy. You can copy right through the plastic. Start with the last page first and move forward so your copies will come out in order.

Note: A special "thank you" to Melissa Shaw, EMT and certified Car Seat Safety Technician, who wrote parts of this lesson.



This lesson covers the important subject of car seats for infants and toddlers.



DVD Worksheet, Page 1

Handed-Down Car Seats

While it is great to get a car seat for free, make sure that it is not out-of-date. Check the car seat's expiration date, usually found on the manufacturer's label, and also make sure the car seat has not been involved in an accident.



Most babies will go through a stage where they don't like their car seat. Don't worry; it will pass.



Car Seat Basics

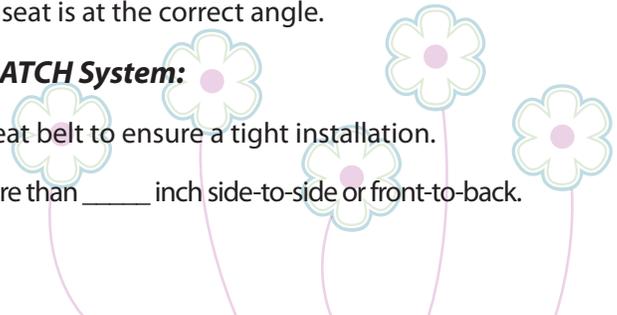
1. Children should ride in a rear-facing car seat until at least 2 years old or until they reach the _____ and _____.
2. Preschoolers should ride in a forward facing car seat with a _____.
3. All _____ kids should use a booster seat until a seat belt fits them correctly.
4. All car seats have a _____ and _____ range posted on the label.
5. You should _____ your car seat to be notified of any defects, recalls or problems.
6. Always read your _____ and _____ owner's manuals to learn how to properly install your car seat.
7. Car seats generally expire after _____ years.
8. You _____ use items that did not originally come with the car seat or are not approved for use by your car seat manufacturer.

Rear-Facing Car Seats

1. Infant or rear-facing only seats, depending on the model, are used for babies until they weigh between _____ and _____ pounds.
2. When your baby reaches the maximum weight limit of her infant seat or when the top of her head is within _____ inch of the top of the car seat shelf, move her into a _____ seat.
3. Convertible seats in the _____ position have higher weight limits of _____ - _____ pounds.
4. Top tether straps are used only for _____ use, unless your manual allows for use in the rear-facing position.
5. Move harness to slots _____ or _____ your child's shoulders.
6. The backseat _____ location is usually the safest place for your child to sit.
7. Never install a car seat near an _____.
8. The back of the car seat must be at a _____ to _____ degree angle. Check the recline indicator to ensure the seat is at the correct angle.

Installing using a seat belt or LATCH System:

1. You must _____ your seat belt to ensure a tight installation.
2. Your car seat should move no more than _____ inch side-to-side or front-to-back.



DVD Worksheet, Page 2

The Easy Booster

Boosters tend to be easier to use than car seats, so you may be tempted to put your baby into one earlier than is required. Resist the desire to use the wrong seat. Your baby needs the correct protection from crashes.

3. A locking clip should be placed less than _____ inch away from the latch plate and be used only for seat belts that have both a lap and shoulder belt.
4. Since 2003 vehicles have _____ found in the crack of the vehicle's seats.
5. True or False: Use either the lower anchors and straps or the seat belt, but never both at the same time.
6. The harness should lay _____ and _____ and tight enough until you cannot pinch any slack. The chest clip should be at the _____ level.

Forward-Facing Car Seats

1. When your child is at least _____ years old and has reached the maximum limit of her rear-facing car seat, she is ready to face forward.
2. The harness should be moved to the reinforced slots _____ or _____ the child's shoulders.
3. Combination seats have a different _____ limit for harness use than for booster seat use.
4. Vehicle lower anchors usually have a weight limit of _____ to _____ pounds. Then you must use the seat belts instead.
5. Since the year 2001, car seats have been made with top tether straps. _____ are used to help reduce the forward movement of the car seat.

Booster Seats

1. Kids need to use a booster seat until they weigh _____ pounds or are about 4' 9".
2. When kids use adult seat belts without a booster seat, the seat belt fits across their soft _____ instead of their strong _____.
3. If you want to see if your child is ready to move out of his booster seat, buckle him into an adult seat belt without the use of a booster seat.

Make sure the lap belt fits across his lower hips and upper _____ and that the shoulder belt goes across the _____ of his collarbone.

He also should be able to sit with his back against the vehicle seat, fold his knees over the edge of the seat, and touch his _____ to the floor.

4. Don't let kids put the shoulder belt behind their _____.
5. Kids need to stay in the backseat until they are _____ years old. If they move to the front seat earlier than age 13, the airbag can harm their bodies.



Make sure the straps are tight. As your baby grows, you will have to adjust but not too much.



DVD Worksheet Key, Page 1

Handed-Down Car Seats

While it is great to get a car seat for free, make sure that it is not out-of-date. Check the car seat's expiration date, usually found on the manufacturer's label, and also make sure the car seat has not been involved in an accident.



Most babies will go through a stage where they don't like their car seat. Don't worry; it will pass.



Car Seat Basics

1. Children should ride in a rear-facing car seat until at least 2 years old or until they reach the **maximum height** and **weight limit**.
2. Preschoolers should ride in a forward facing car seat with a **harness**.
3. All **school age** kids should use a booster seat until a seat belt fits them correctly.
4. All car seats have a **height** and **weight** range posted on the label.
5. You should **register** your car seat to be notified of any defects, recalls or problems.
6. Always read your **car seat instruction manual** and **vehicle** owner's manuals to learn how to properly install your car seat.
7. Car seats generally expire after **six** years.
8. You **should not** use items that did not originally come with the car seat or are not approved for use by your car seat manufacturer.

Rear-Facing Car Seats

1. Infant or rear-facing only seats, depending on the model, are used for babies until they weigh between **22** and **35** pounds.
2. When your baby reaches the maximum weight limit of her infant seat or when the top of her head is within **one** inch of the top of the car seat shelf, move her into a **convertible** seat.
3. Convertible seats in the **rear-facing** position have higher weight limits of **30** – **40** pounds.
4. Top tether straps are used only for **forward-facing** use, unless your manual allows for use in the rear-facing position.
5. Move harness to slots **at** or **below** your child's shoulders.
6. The backseat **center** location is usually the safest place for your child to sit.
7. Never install a car seat near an **airbag**.
8. The back of the car seat must be at a **30** to **45** degree angle. Check the recline indicator to ensure the seat is at the correct angle.

Installing using a seat belt or LATCH System:

1. You must **lock** your seat belt to ensure a tight installation.
2. Your car seat should move no more than **one** inch side-to-side or front-to-back.
3. A locking clip should be placed less than **one** inch away from the latch plate and be used only for seat belts that have both a lap and shoulder belt.

DVD Worksheet Key, Page 2

The Easy Booster

Boosters tend to be easier to use than car seats, so you may be tempted to put your baby into one earlier than is required. Resist the desire to use the wrong seat. Your baby needs the correct protection from crashes.

4. Since 2003 vehicles have lower anchors found in the crack of the vehicle's seats.
5. True or False: Use either the lower anchors and straps or the seat belt, but never both at the same time. **True**
6. The harness should lay flat and snug and tight enough until you cannot pinch any slack. The chest clip should be at the armpit level.

Forward-Facing Car Seats

1. When your child is at least two years old and has reached the maximum limit of her rear-facing car seat, she is ready to face forward.
2. The harness should be moved to the reinforced slots at or above the child's shoulders.
3. Combination seats have a different weight limit for harness use than for booster seat use.
4. Vehicle lower anchors usually have a weight limit of 40 to 48 pounds. Then you must use the seat belts instead.
5. Since the year 2001, car seats have been made with top tether straps. Tethers are used to help reduce the forward movement of the car seat.

Booster Seats

1. Kids need to use a booster seat until they weigh 80 pounds or are about 4'9".
2. When kids use adult seat belts without a booster seat, the seat belt fits across their soft stomach instead of their strong hips.
3. If you want to see if your child is ready to move out of his booster seat, buckle him into an adult seat belt without the use of a booster seat.

Make sure the lap belt fits across his lower hips and upper thighs and that the shoulder belt goes across the middle of his collarbone.

He also should be able to sit with his back against the vehicle seat, fold his knees over the edge of the seat, and touch his feet to the floor.

4. Don't let kids put the shoulder belt behind their back.
5. Kids need to stay in the backseat until they are 13 years old. If they move to the front seat earlier than age 13, the airbag can harm their bodies.



Make sure the straps are tight. As your baby grows, you will have to adjust but not too much.



Homework, Page 1

A Good Design

Modern day car seats are designed specifically for babies and work very well in preventing serious injury when used correctly. That is the key, though; they must be used correctly. While it may be boring, read the instruction manual and make sure you are using the car seat correctly.



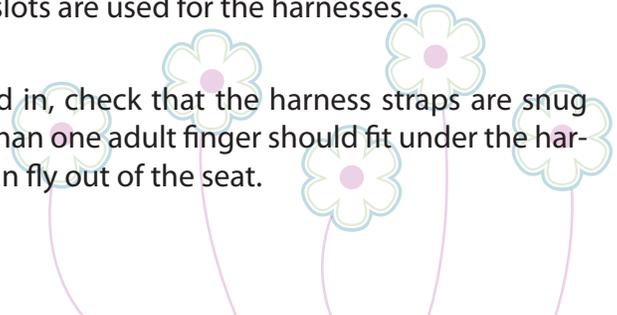
Make sure your seat is set-up for your baby as he grows. Read your instructions for more information.



You may THINK you have your car seat strapped in right. But studies show that only 2 percent of the children in the United States are secured in their car seats correctly. The other 98 percent are in danger of being killed or injured from a simple 30 mph crash. Out of a thousand children's deaths from car crashes, almost all of them were preventable if the following steps had been taken.

Read and check off the safety points below that apply to your situation.

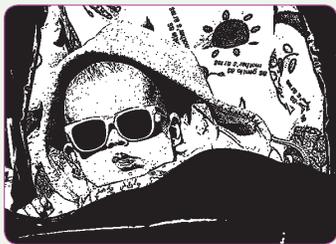
- Check your car seats expiration date. All car seats have expiration dates somewhere on them, usually on the manufacturer's label. Do not use a car seat past its expiration date, as the plastic may no longer be strong enough to support your child safely.
- Read the instruction booklet that came with your car seat and check to be sure the seat is the correct size for your child's age and weight. When seats are crash tested with wrong-fitting dummies of children, they do not hold up.
- Check that the seat is installed through correct belt paths so securely that you can move it no more than an inch. Even secure seats will fly forward, up to 32 inches in a crash. Insecure seats can cause serious internal damage to your child as they will hit whatever is in front of them.
- Are the seat harness straps in the slot at or below the infant's shoulder (rear-facing) and at or above the toddler's shoulder (forward-facing)? The child can fly out of the seat in an accident if the straps are in the wrong place.
- If you have a convertible seat (the kind that goes from infant to toddler), check that the harness is in the top slots for convertible seats facing forward. The only part of these seats that are reinforced for forward-facing is at the top. The child's weight can break the back of the seat out, causing him to fly out in an accident, if the lower slots are used for the harnesses.
- When you buckle your child in, check that the harness straps are snug (not tight, but snug). No more than one adult finger should fit under the harness. If they are loose, a child can fly out of the seat.



Homework, Page 2

Dirty Seats

Car seats are great for safety, but also for catching trash, crumbs, and gunk. Look for a seat that has a removable liner that can be washed. Also, occasionally your seat will just need a good hose down.



While making everything perfect may seem silly, it is important to keep your baby safe.



- Check to see that the harness retainer clip is at armpit level to hold harness straps over the shoulders. If it is too low, the child can fly out of the seat in an accident.
- Check to see that the belts are not twisted. They lose 10 percent of their effectiveness for each twist.
- If your infant weighs less than 20 pounds or is under 1 year old, he should be facing the rear of the vehicle reclined at a 45-degree angle. A very young child facing forward and not at a 45-degree angle cannot handle the spinal damage incurred in even a minor crash. Use a rolled-up towel, swimming noodle, or other device under the back of the seat to create the angle, unless your seat base comes with this adjustment.
- Is the infant seat's handle down when it is strapped in? Head trauma can be caused by hitting it.
- Is your child too large for a toddler seat but too small for a seat belt? If so, make sure she is secured in a high-back or regular booster seat. Seat belts that fit an adult regularly will cause serious internal damage to a child who isn't large enough for the seat belt to fit right yet. Again, be sure they are at the right weight for the booster seats as well as other seats.
- Do you have a child under the age of 10? Does she ride in the back, safely buckled up? If you have a car with no backseat, the child's seat should be back as far as possible. Even in a vehicle with no backseat, never put a rear-facing infant seat in front of an airbag.
- Do you buckle up every time you get in the car to go somewhere?
- Call your local fire department and ask them how you can have your car seat installation checked by a certified Car Seat Technician. This service is free and will give you an opportunity to see if you have done it correctly. It may take a few minutes, but those few minutes may save your baby from serious injury or death.



