

# Moving Up Safely: Rear Facing Only Seats

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## Alaska State Law

- All passengers regardless of age need to use a seatbelt or appropriate restraint (car seat or booster seat) device.
- The driver of the car is responsible for all passengers under the age of 16 to be properly restrained in the vehicle.
- All children less than one year of age or older than one year but less than 20 pounds are required to ride in a rear facing car seat.

**American Academy of Pediatrics recommends “children remain in a rear-facing seat as long as possible, until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their seat.”**



1. Car seat reclined according to manufacturer's instructions.
2. Retainer clip at armpit level.
3. Harness comes through the seat at or below the child's shoulders.
4. Harness snug and flat.

## Selecting the Right Seat

Making sure that you select the right type of child restraint and that it is properly installed and used is one way to give the best protection possible to infants and young children that you are transporting.

- Two types of car seats that can be installed rear facing: rear facing only seat and convertible car seat
  - A rear facing only seat can be installed in the rear facing position. This car seat may or may not come with a base.
  - Convertible seats can convert from a rear facing to a forward facing position.
- Select your child safety seat based on the size and weight of your child.
- Each seat has a maximum height and weight limit for use, listed on the seat's label and in the manufacturer's instructions.
- Remember to send in the registration card if you purchased a new seat. This is helpful in contacting you if there is a recall on your seat.

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## Know the History of Your Car Seat

This is especially true if the car seat is second hand.

- Car seats do expire. The expiration date maybe located on the car seat usually on the bottom or the side of the seat.
- Manufacturer expiration is different for each company. Check with the manufacturer or attend a car seat safety check for more information.
- Has the car seat been in a crash? If so, cut the harness straps and discard in a dark trash bag so it cannot be reused.

## Additional Resources

Mat-Su Services for Children & Adults (MSSCA):  
Safe Kids Mat-Su  
1225 W. Spruce Ave.  
Wasilla, AK 99654  
907-352-1229



Safe Kids Alaska  
3200 Providence Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99508  
907-212-3194



You can also register your car seat at the following websites if you haven't done so already!

[www.safercar.gov/parents/index.htm](http://www.safercar.gov/parents/index.htm)

[www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)



**For help learning how to correctly install and use your child's safety seat, speak with a certified technician at**

**You can also visit  
Alaska's seat check website  
[www.carseatsak.org](http://www.carseatsak.org)**



**Child Passenger Safety Technician**

**Call for private fitting appointment  
This is a free service**

## **LATCH System**

**LATCH** stands for **L**ower **A**nchors and **T**ethers for **C**hildren.

- Alternative and more simplified way of installing your child's seat in the vehicle.
- Uses straps connected to anchors in the vehicle instead of the vehicle's seat belts.
- Be sure to follow both the car seat and the manufacturer's instructions for your vehicle for using LATCH system. If the vehicle and the car seat are not designed for the LATCH system, the vehicle seatbelt will be used to secure to seat in the vehicle.
- **Do not use both the LATCH system and the vehicle seat belt together!**
- Once the seat has been installed and has a correct angle, give it a tug. A properly installed car seat will not move an inch at the belt path.

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## **Basic Safety Tips**

No bulky clothing

- In an accident, the extra padding can compress allowing for excessive movement of the infant and possible ejection.
- Use an extra blanket to cover the infant when moving them to and from the vehicle during inclement weather.

Ride in a back seat

- Infants should always ride in the back seat and **NEVER** in front of an air bag.
- Kids that ride rear facing are five times safer than forward facing.

Avoid hard toys and aftermarket items

- These items can become projectiles during a crash or hard breaking situation.
- Do not hang items from the car seat handle; they can become dislodged as well potentially injuring the infant or other occupants.

Food and drinks

- These items are choking hazards when traveling. It is best to pull over, enjoy the snack and then resume the trip.

This handout is designed to help you understand the two types of rear facing child restraints along with how to install and use them properly so that your precious cargo arrives safely at your destination. With all information intact, reprint permission granted.