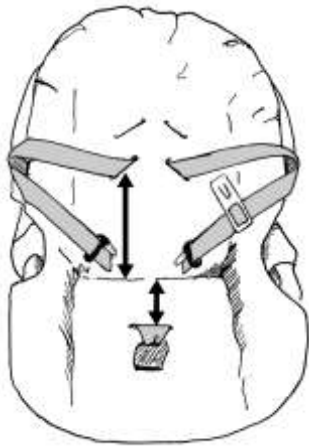


Car Seats and Car Beds for Premies and Small Newborns As of 10/11

Small babies and those with special needs due to prematurity or other medical conditions will not fit well in all car seats sold for newborns. Selection must consider both proper harness fit and the manufacturers' lowest weight limit rating. In some cases, a doctor might recommend that the infant use a special kind of restraint, a car bed.



Shopping tips:

- Use a tape measure or other measuring tool when shopping. Smaller measurements are better for a small baby.
- When measuring harness height, push down on the seat padding as a child's weight would.
- Also consider crotch buckle distance from seat back and whether it is adjustable.
- Many car seats for small infants include a padded insert that is helpful for positioning the baby. However, do not use add-on products of this type that did not come with the car seat.

In general, look for:

A Car Seat With a Low Shoulder Harness Position (8 inches or lower)

Harnesses for rear-facing use should attach to the car seat through slots that are at or below the infant's shoulders. For small babies, this fit is not attainable on all car seats because some have lowest slots that are higher than a small infant's shoulders. Caregivers who are looking for a car seat that has the best likelihood for proper harness fit for a small newborn should consider car seats that have a lowest harness slot position that is 8 inches or less above the seat. (Note: Though 8 inches is a guideline for the maximum that may be appropriate for some small infants, many require lowest slots that are far shorter than that.)

Don't assume all car seats are the same! Though many infant car seats (the type with a handle) have low lowest harness slots, not all do. On the other hand, the larger, convertible-style car seats typically have higher lowest slots, but certain models do have measurements that would fit a small newborn.

For a resource that provides measurements for car seats, including lowest harness height, go to: <http://sites.google.com/site/carseatmeasurements>.

(SRN is not affiliated with this site and does not guarantee measurements contained on the site. Due to various considerations, such as inserts and padding, measuring outcomes can be somewhat subjective and may vary.)

A Harness That Can Shorten Enough to Fit Snugly on a Small Infant

For a harness to work properly in a crash it must fit an infant snugly. The harness should fit close to the body, without sagging, along all body segments – at the shoulders, along the torso, and across the legs. On some car seat models, it is impossible to shorten the webbing enough to fit an infant that is very small.

To check if the harness is snug enough, be sure that you cannot comfortably slide more than one of your fingers under the harness as it crosses any of the areas along the body. If you can stack a second finger under the harness outward of the infant's body, the harness is too loose. Another way to test is to attempt to pinch the webbing; you should not be able to pinch webbing in an up/down direction along any part of the webbing as it crosses the body. If the harness cannot be made snug enough, the infant should not use that car seat.

Some car seats for infants come with specially-designed newborn inserts that may put a very small infant in a better seating position and/or improve the harness fit. Check the car seat's owner's manual regarding guidance for when this insert should be used and when it should be removed.

IMPORTANT: Infant inserts that are not sold with the car seat are non-regulated and should not be used.

A Car Seats That Can be Used for the Baby's Weight

Car seats are required to indicate a lower and upper child weight limit, so check to make sure your baby weighs within the allowed range. For most car seats that can be used rear facing, the lower weight limit is 5 pounds, which poses a challenge for newborns who are discharged from the hospital under 5 pounds. A few infant car seat models are labeled with a 4-pound lower weight limit, and a few others say they can be used "from birth."

Car seats that may be used with infants weighing less than 5 pounds:

The following is a list of car seats that the manufacturer has rated for use by infants who weigh less than 5 pounds. Note: As described above, lowest harness position height is also important. This height measurement can vary; two car seats that have the same starting weight may not be equivalent in suitability of fit for a preemie, even when that weight is less than 5 pounds. Always check the directions and the fit on the infant.

Note: The infant car seats listed come with infant insert padding and may be used with or without the included base unless otherwise noted.

Brand	Infant Car Seat Model	Weight Use Range	Notes
Britax	B-Safe	4-30 lbs.	
Britax	Chaperone	4-30 lbs.	Foam insert included for optional use <i>under</i> padding; anti-rebound bar
Chicco	Key Fit 22	4-22 lbs.	

Chicco	Key Fit 30	4–30 lbs.	
Combi	Cocorro	3-33 lbs. (RF) 20-40 lbs.; 1 year (FF)	Change from 5 lbs. happened late 2011 and is not retroactive. Check labels carefully for weight limits. Can tether both rear and forward facing.
Combi	Shuttle	Birth–33 lbs.	Anti-rebound bar
Combi	Navette	Birth–33 lbs.	Anti-rebound bar; no base; institutional sales only
CYBEX	Aton	4-32 lbs.	Comes with “newborn inlay” under seat cover for use with small infants. U.S. distributor is Regal Lager.
Graco	Snug Ride 30	4–30 lbs.	Check labels carefully; many Snug Ride variations start at 5 lbs.
Learning Curve	Via 35	4-35 lbs.	Expected late spring 2011
miaModa	Certo	4–22 lbs.	
Nania/Team Tex	Baby Ride	Birth–22 lbs.	No base; institutional sales only.
Orbit	Orbit Baby	Birth–30 lbs.*	Sold as part of travel system. *Change to upper weight limit of 30 lbs. is as of 3/11 and is retroactive to all previously sold models in U.S. Go to http://www.orbitbaby.com/en/car-seat-weight-rating for a label update kit, if needed.
Safety 1st	Comfy Carry/ Comfy Carry Elite	4–22 lbs.	Model IC021 adjusts from the rear of the CR; Elite (IC026 and IC030) adjust from the front of the CR.
Safety 1st	onBoard 22	4–22 lbs.	Model # 22077; Also called Sure Fit as part of Endeavor Travel System
Safety 1st	onBoard 35	4–35 lbs.	Always double-check labels: Model # 22395 "Air Infant", 22077, 22078 and IC099 start at 4 lbs. NOTE: Model 22375 has a minimum weight of 5 lbs.
Summer Infant	Prodigy	4-32 lbs.	

Discontinued Seats for Small Babies:

Infant seats rated for babies under 5 pounds that have been discontinued, but that have some models that are not yet expired, include:

Britax Companion (4–22 lbs.)

Combi Connection (birth–22 lbs.), Shuttle 22 (birth–22 lbs.)

Graco Assura (birth–22 lbs.)

Learning Curve (The First Years) 1400 (4–22 lbs.); Via (4–22 lbs.)

miaModa Viva and Viva Supreme (birth–22 lbs.) ***(The Viva and Viva Supreme have been recalled and should not be used!)***

Car beds: For Infants Who Must Ride Lying Down

Infants who are premature, very small, or have other medical conditions may experience dangerous breathing or heart rate problems when seated in the semi-reclined position of a rear-facing car seat. The hospital should monitor at-risk infants in a car seat before discharge. In some cases, a doctor will determine that the child may go home only if riding in a lying down position.

In these situations, a car bed must be used – but options are limited to those listed here. (For ordering information, see the Car Beds—Direct Sales and Distributors list, below.)

Brand	Car Bed Model	Weight Range	Notes
Angel Guard	Angel Ride	Birth to 9 lbs.	Fits on one vehicle seat; prone, supine, or side-lying positions
Cosco (Dorel)	Dream Ride SE	5 to 20 lbs.	Installs on two seats of vehicle bench seating; prone or supine positions
Merritt Manufacturing	Hope Car Bed	4.5 to 35 lbs.	Installs on two seats of vehicle bench seating; prone, supine, or side-lying positions

Institutional Distributors: (may not be a complete list)

Evenflo — These contacts are for institutional sales of \$500 or more only; use Child Source, below, for smaller purchases.

Angie Beaulac, (877) 288-0288, evenflosales@aol.com (Indiana and states to the west of Indiana, except Texas)

Patsy Pilcher, (800) 768-6077, ppilcher@bellsouth.net (eastern states)

LBI Distributors, Inc.— <http://www.lbidistributors.com>; 609-860-6332

Car seats for infants: Graco

Child Source (Mercury Distributing)—<http://www.mercurydistributing.com>
330-723-4739 or (800) 815-6330

Car seats for infants: Chicco, Combi, Dorel (Cosco, Safety 1st), Evenflo, Nania

Car beds: Angel Guard and Cosco Dream Ride SE

Prevention Alternatives, Inc.— 517-927-7731; shinn@comcast.net

Car seats for infants: Chicco, Combi, Cosco, Evenflo, Graco, Nania, Safety 1st

Car Beds: Angel Guard, Cosco Dream Ride SE, Hope Car Bed

Car Beds — direct sales and distributors:

Angel Guard: (Angel Ride Car Bed); <http://www.angel-guard.com> (to purchase directly; next-day delivery available)

Cardinal Health: (Angel Ride Car Bed) 800-234-8701 (ask for Material # BC2403FOF)

Dorel: (Dream Ride SE Car Bed) 800-544-1108, www.djgusa.com

Child Source (Mercury Distributing): (Angel Guard and Cosco Dream Ride SE; see contact info above)

Merritt Manufacturing: (Hope Car Bed) Fax: 317-893-2567;
Phone: 317-409-0148; E-Mail: info@eztether.com

Prevention Alternatives: (Angel Guard, Cosco Dream Ride SE, Hope Car Bed; see contact info above)