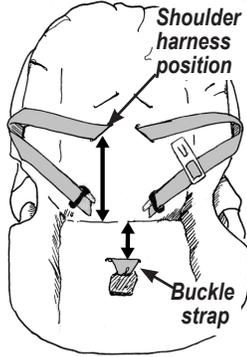




### Checking harness fit

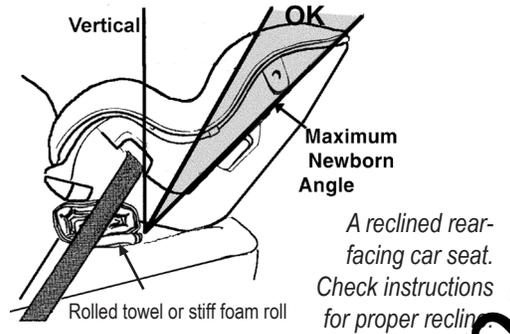
Look for a harness that can be set up to fit a small body. Take a tape measure when you shop, and check the:

- **Shoulder harness:** Put the straps in the lowest position. They must go through the car seat at or below baby's shoulders. If they do not, try a different car seat. For most newborns, the lowest position should be less than 8 inches up from the bottom cushion. For tiny babies, look for one as low as 5 or 6 inches.
- **Buckle strap:** Look for one that is less than 5 inches forward of the back cushion. Many straps can be adjusted.



### Correct car seat use

- Limit time baby spends traveling.
- Do not use a car seat in the home.
- Dress your baby in clothes with legs so the buckle strap fits between the legs. It is not safe for thick clothing or blankets to be under the straps. If using a blanket, put it **over** the straps.
- Don't add padding *under* or *behind* your baby. It makes the harness too loose, so your baby could be thrown out in a crash. Do use the pads that come with your car seat. Remove them only when the instructions say you should.
- Put the shoulder straps in a position at baby's shoulders or just below. If the lowest position goes through the car seat *above* the baby's shoulders, use a different car seat.
- Place the harness on baby as shown in the instructions. Make it snug against all parts of baby's body. Test that you cannot pinch any slack in the straps (picture right).
- Put the chest clip at armpit level. If it touches the neck of a tiny baby when placed here, move it down slightly.
- If baby needs more support, add small fabric rolls *beside* baby. Make sure the fabric does not cover the face or limit breathing. (See picture, page 1.) If baby slouches, ask the car seat maker if you should add a rolled cloth behind the buckle strap (as shown).
- Install baby's car seat in the back seat of the car. Use the center seat if you can get a good fit there.
- Install the car seat tightly. It should not move more than an inch when pushed near the belt. **ALWAYS** follow car seat instructions and the car manual.



**Your baby should sit reclined**—not too flat or too upright (see picture, above). Be sure the chin does not fall forward, which could block baby's breathing. Baby's head should rest against the back of the car seat.

**ALWAYS** follow the instructions and the recline guide on the car seat to make it recline. If you have followed instructions and your car seat is still too upright, you may need to place a rolled towel or foam roll underneath it (see above). If it is not possible to make the car seat recline properly in your car, try a different car seat.

**Note:** Breathing monitors and other heavy items must be secured so they cannot hurt baby in a crash. Use a nearby seat belt or place items on the floor of the car.

### Resources

**National Center for Safe Transportation of Children w/ Special Health Care Needs:** 800-755-0912, [www.preventinjury.org](http://www.preventinjury.org) (Look under Special Needs)

**AAP Clinical Report:** "Safe Transportation of Preterm and Low Birth Weight Infants at Hospital Discharge." <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/123/5/1424>

**National Vehicle Safety Hotline:** Recall and general safety questions, 888-327-4236 or 800-424-9153 (tty), [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)

**SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.:** Questions, recall list 800-745-7233, [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)

**Find someone to help:** 866-732-8243, [www.seatcheck.org](http://www.seatcheck.org) (select Inspection under Installation Help) or <http://www.safekids.org> (select Find a Tech)

### Car Bed Information

Dream Ride LATCH (Dorel Juvenile) [www.safetyst.com](http://www.safetyst.com); 800-544-1108

Hope Car Bed and Angel Ride Car Bed (Meritt Manufacturing) [www.ezrider.com](http://www.ezrider.com), 317-409-0148

### Distributors:

Mercury, [www.mercurydistributing.com](http://www.mercurydistributing.com)  
Prevention Alternatives, 517-927-7731, or email [shinn@comcast.net](mailto:shinn@comcast.net)

### Dangers of Front Air Bags

**Place baby in the back seat!** An opening air bag can kill a baby in a car seat or on someone's lap.



**Baby's car seat must face the rear and should be in the back seat.** But, if baby does ride in front, the air bag **MUST** be off. Look for an on-off switch and an air bag light on the dashboard.

Learn about the air bags in your car. They protect most riders—but can be a danger to babies. Check the car's owner's manual and warning labels (such as on the car's visors).