

To provide the best protection for children, NHTSA recommends its **4 Steps for Kids** where a child progresses from a rear-facing infant seat, to a forward-facing toddler seat, then to a booster seat, and finally to a seat belt. The **4 Steps for Kids** guidelines show the correct type of restraint system to use according to a child's age, weight and height:



1. REAR-FACING INFANT SEATS [reclined] in the back seat from birth to at least one year old AND at least 20 pounds, then

2. FORWARD-FACING TODDLER SEATS [upright] in the back seat from age one to about age four and from 20 to 40 pounds, then

3. BOOSTER SEATS [upright] in the back seat from about age four and 40 pounds to at least age eight, unless 4'9" (California law is age 6 or 60 pounds), then

4. SEAT BELTS at age eight or older or taller than 4'9". All children 12 and under should ride in the back seat only.

It should be noted that California law requires children ride properly buckled up in safety seats or boosters until they are at least 6 years old or 60 pounds. NHTSA goes even further, recommending the **best practice** is that children who have outgrown child safety seats be properly restrained in booster seats in the back seat until they are at least eight years old or 4'9" tall.