

# CHILD SAFETY LAWS



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## WHAT IS THE LAW REGARDING CHILD SAFETY IN A VEHICLE?

As a parent or guardian, you **MUST** secure any child under eight years of age in the **BACK** seat of a motor vehicle. Children must be in a child seat or other suitable restraint system until reaching 40 lbs., 57", or eight years of age.

### EXCEPTIONS

Overwhelmingly, the safest place for your child under eight years old is in the back seat. In certain situations the law makes exceptions allowing a child to ride in a front seat if:

1. There is no rear seat.
2. The rear seats are side-facing jump seats.
3. The rear seats are rear-facing seats.
4. The Child Passenger Restraint System cannot be installed properly in the rear seat.
5. All rear seats are already occupied by children under the age of twelve years.
6. Medical reasons necessitate that the child or ward not ride in the rear seat. Documentation required.

Even if one of these exceptions applies, a child may not be transported in a rear-facing restraint system in the front seat *with an active passenger air bag*.

### CONSEQUENCES

Parents can be fined \$475 for each child under 16, not properly secured, and get driving record points.

## HOW DO I USE MY CHILD'S CAR SEAT PROPERLY?

Putting a child in a car seat is not enough. To be effective at saving lives, the seat must be properly installed and the child must be properly placed in it. The first place to look for information concerning how to properly install your child's car seat is the instruction manual that came with the car seat. You will also want to look at the vehicle owner's manual for your car. Every situation is different. Not all car seats are appropriate for every child, vehicle seat, seat belt, or seating system. The best car seat is the one that fits the child, fits the vehicle, and is one you will be able to install and use correctly every time.

### AIRPLANES

Current law does not require a Child Restraint System for an infant during flight. However, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration does recommend their use. According to Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR), airlines are required to accept an approved CRS if the child's parent/guardian/attendant has purchased a ticket for the seat the CRS will occupy. If you do not buy a ticket for your child, ask your airline to allow use of an empty seat.

### RESOURCES

California Vehicle Code § 27360; 27363

Free Child Safety Seat Inspections:

Call your local police department.

1-866-SEAT-CHECK or [www.seatcheck.org](http://www.seatcheck.org).

For more information visit:

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

[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

[www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)

[www.saferideneews.com](http://www.saferideneews.com)