

The Ultimate Guide in Choosing Car Seats for Children

By Nelson Nigel

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## The Ultimate Guide in Choosing Car Seats for Children



Buying a car seat for our child is one of the most important safety measures parents need to initiate in their lifetime. Statistics prove that if you have the right seat installed for your child, you actually reduce the chances of a car accident death by 71%.

Considering what's at stake, it's a big deal to get it absolutely right? Unfortunately, the “pressure” of doing this correctly the first time can often overwhelm first time parents. This is what this Guide is for – to simplify the process of buying child car seats. There are some very simple pointers to consider.

Our Guide will stick to the basics, steering you clear from too much information that often leads to confusion.

There is a genuine need to demystify car seat selection. This is not just a one-time Guide rather it's a lifetime reference. You have to be able to accurately identify each kind of car seat and understand its functions, limitations, and other key attributes.

This goes beyond fitting your own car seat. It also means that you can freely travel with your kids and be able to ensure their safety even in a child seat-equipped rental car.

So, which car seat should you go for?

Car seats are generally categorized by the age and weight of the child.

# Types of Car Seats

## Infant Car Seat

A newborn and infant car seat will always be *rear facing*. It will come with its own base, which is directly installed in your car. This two-part assembly makes it very safe. It is possible to have multiple carriers so that you can interchange them. The base, however, remains fixed in the car.



Most infant seats can be used for children weighing 5 to 30 pounds. *Decide first* for the weight you want or need because different brands and models have varied specifications.

It is, however, more common for a child to be too tall than to be too heavy for a car seat. To be sure about this, *know the height limit* of the infant seat or you can check by seeing whether your baby's head is *less than an inch from the carrier shell*.

These “transition” markers must be noted *very carefully*. You need the best fitting seat for your child. Upgrading too quickly to a convertible car seat, for example, can mean moving your child to a seat too big for him/her at a critical developmental stage.

## Convertible Seat



The convertible seat must be bought *before your child turns one*. These seats can be installed rear or forward-facing. With its harness system, you can be sure that this is as safe as the infant car seat only this time it has a higher weight capacity. This will give you the ability to keep the seat facing the rear even if your child is getting heavier and taller, something that the *American Academy of Pediatrics recommends*.

As stated, convertible seats can be used in a rear-facing configuration. Every manufacturer has different specifications for the rear facing limits of its products. Some brands go up to a 50-pound capacity for the rear-facing position. It is best to buy a car seat that has the highest weight capacity for rear-facing. While there are brands that deem it okay for 1-year-olds to ride facing-forward, this is not recommended, and is even prohibited in some states. This should be taken into account if you're travelling through states or abroad.

When the child reaches 3/4 years of age, they will be too heavy for the rear-facing configuration, so the car seat can then be “converted” into a forward-facing position. In a forward-facing position it can now carry as much as 65 lbs. or more.

## Booster Seat



As your child reaches the weight limit of a forward-facing seat, it is time to move up to a booster. Boosters use the car's own seatbelt allowing the child to be positioned higher, providing the same protection to kids as it does for adults.

Boosters allow children to be secured over the sternum and right along the center of the collarbone. It also secures the upper thigh rather than the abdomen. There are two types of booster seats, the backless and the high-back.

It is better to go for the high back for two reasons. First, the high-back design positions the seat belt so that it secures the shoulder while also providing protection from possible impacts from the side. Second, it allows children to lay their heads to the side comfortably. Booster seats can be used by children up to 9-years of age and weighing up to 80 lbs. This is on par with the requirement of some state laws.

## Other Options for Parents

We have covered the basic car seat options for parents. Now let's explore other seats that are available on the market today that may be a practical solution to your unique needs.

### All-in-One Convertible Car Seats



What if you can have one seat from the very start? This is the idea behind all-in-one models. While this is obviously a money saver, the truth is, all-in-one car seats offer the best options per developmental stage: infants, toddlers, and older children.

These type of car seats boast an impressive weight capacity range. They go from as low as 5 lbs. (practically good for newborns) up to 120 lbs., which is inside the booster weight range. When fitted on its rear-facing configuration they can go up to 50 lbs. in some models. All-in-one convertibles can accommodate for every physical aspect of a child's developmental stages.

There are drawbacks with fully convertible car seats. First, because the all-in-one tries to do the job of multiple seats, *they are larger and heavier* than any single-purpose models.

With its larger footprint, there is a good chance that it will not fit smaller cars, which can be a problem for first-time parents. It is, however, a good option as a reserve seat, or for using in a rental car where the age of children being transported differs from one trip to the next.

## Toddler Booster



This is an ideal option for children who belong to a specific age, weight, height and who have outgrown the 5 point harness of traditional forward facing car seats. Children can be ready for a booster when they are 40 – 65 pounds.

The toddler booster is more cost efficient than a convertible seat provided that the child meets the age when the forward-facing seat is appropriate for use. Needless to say, *weight and height requirements must also be met.*



### **Additional Pointers**

According to the *National Highway Traffic Safety Association* (NHTSA), up to 90% of child car seats are not installed correctly. While child seats provide good protection, if not used or fitted correctly, they can pose significant safety issues. Mind these pointers:

1. Be sure to have the right seat, considering your child's age, height, and weight.
2. Be sure to have the seat installed tightly. It should not move an inch side to side along the seat belt path. The belt path is the opening on the car seat where the car seat belt goes across the seat to connect to the locking mechanism.
3. Check, tighten, recheck, and then repeat. Do this as much as you need to. This is bound to be challenging, so be patient.
4. Be sure to check the height of the harness. If the seat is in a rear-facing configuration, the straps should be right at the shoulder or below it. If it's in a forward-facing position, the harness should be above or right at the shoulder of the child.

5. Be sure to have the harness tightly secured. You shouldn't be able to freely move the straps on your child's shoulder, nor pinch the strap's fabric.
6. Be sure the recline angle of a rear-facing seat is set correctly and then thoroughly secured. If this moves forward in transit it can obstruct your child's breathing.
7. A convertible car seat has two belt paths; one under the legs for rear facing installations and one roughly behind the back for forward facing installations.

## **Travel and Car Seats**

There will be times when you will need to travel with your child by using cabs, car rentals, or transportation services via conventional booking channels or with mobile apps.

Even if we are in a different city and not driving our own car we cannot set aside safety. Outsourcing our child's safety should be handled with extreme caution for obvious reasons. Listed below are some car services that provide child seats in their vehicles, a feature that will give parents peace of mind. We also list some common transportation options in NYC that simply cannot ensure your child's safety. To remedy this we have provided safe alternatives.

### **Lyft**

Lyft is now offering traveling parents the option of booking a ride with forward-facing car seats – an added feature of this easy-to-use, app-powered car service. So long as your child is already 1-years-old and is at least 22 lbs., (48 lbs., tops) and 31 inches in height (52 inches, tops) then Lyft is the perfect choice for you. For a surcharge of \$8.98 on top of other applicable fees, you can avail the service in a few screen taps.

### **Kidmoto**

Kidmoto provides a fresh perspective on the day-to-day hardships that face traveling parents. Kidmoto operates in a niche segment of the transportation market, it provides a solution to a real problem. Taxis, car services, including Uber or Lyft, do not provide fully convertible, multiple installed car seats in one vehicle. Kidmoto connects passengers to a network of professionally trained drivers who provide 1 to 4 fully harnessed and installed child car seats for safer airport transportation.

### **Uber**

Uber is a household name in app-powered transport services. It now offers forward-facing car seats. To request one all you need to do is open their app, choose UberX in the options button right at the

bottom of your mobile device's screen and then tap "car seat". Like Lyft, its seats can accommodate children at least one years of age, weighing 22-48 pounds with a height of around 31 to 52 inches. You will need to pay an additional \$10 on your original trip-booking amount.

### **Yellow Cab**

While NYC taxis are very common all over the city, these do not offer child safety seats, a big no-no for people traveling with their children. While hailing a taxi is faster wherever you are in the city, you have to understand that your baby is never really safe in a taxi, all the more so, if you are traveling with more than one child.

### **NYC Car Sharing**

There are a few new car-sharing services in New York. What is NYC car sharing exactly? It is more like using an app to rent a car hourly or daily. These vehicles do not come with car seats.

## **Local Black Limousine**

Many local black limo companies in NYC seem to make it a tad easier to book a car with child seats. However, there are hidden problems. Drivers do not change the harnessing, they do not install the car seats. Drivers often times bring the wrong car seats and they tend to be very dirty. Furthermore, the passenger does not know if the car seats from these companies have been recalled by the manufacturer. Lastly, passengers do not know if the car seats have fallen down which means they can be cracked and no good. Most importantly, the passenger has to do all of the installation work. This is not a good option for parents with children.

## **Shuttle service**

Typical shuttle services in airports including those in NYC are by default not child-friendly. While there are some that are into the child safety niche, most cannot provide you with safety seats. This can be a problem especially if you are traveling with the whole family and you have multiple kids.

What you can do is look intensely to find an airport shuttle service that can provide child seats, and you will have to install the seats yourself. Online searches can get you multiple leads. Book in advance if you have to, as long as you can ensure the safety of your kids. Be clear just how many seats you want. Just be aware that these services might be more expensive than typical shuttle services and you will bear the burden of installing the car seats.

When it comes to child safety, nothing fits the term best than car safety seats. And this is why as a parent you must have a thorough understanding of each type of car seat and when you need to use it as your child grows.

This guide is a testament to the necessity of knowing a lot more about child seats. Now, even if you travel around and need to book car services, you know what to ask for and you know how to check if the installed seat is the right one and if it is installed properly.

Baby Does NYC is dedicated to providing free or low-cost expert advice to new parents. This is made possible through our Sponsored Partnerships. Kidmoto sponsored this Free Guide. Read how they are disrupting the car seat transport industry.



### **Guide courtesy of Kidmoto**

Kidmoto provides secure car seat taxi transportation for parents with small children that are traveling to and from NYC airports.

### ***Visit Our Website***

<http://www.kidmoto.taxi>

### ***Our Story***

The concept of providing safe family airport transportation is now a reality because of lifelong entrepreneur and former NYC yellow taxi driver, Nelson Nigel. Kidmoto Technologies™ started in November 2016 and aims to be the next Uber but strictly with children's car seats.

Kidmoto has created a network of professional drivers that provide convenient and safe airport taxi transportation for families with small children. Car services and taxis do not provide installed car seats. Airport passengers are faced with the reality of just “jumping into a cab” with unrestrained children. Kidmoto created a solution to this problem and provides a fresh perspective to this hardship that faces traveling parents.

The Kidmoto app connects parents to a network of professionally trained, Kidmoto certified, drivers that provide professionally secured car seats for safe airport transportation.

### ***Reviews***

YELP: <https://goo.gl/ksNisi>

FACEBOOK: <https://goo.gl/re3kmA> <https://goo.gl/re3kmA>

GOOGLE: <https://goo.gl/whv2AB>

TRIP ADVISOR: <https://goo.gl/re3kmA>

## ***Press***

1. NEWS <http://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2016/09/29/queens-college-opens-tech-hub-for-local-entrepreneurs-.arch.news.html>
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11. NEWS <http://www.schnepscommunicationsevents.com/outstanding-businessmen-celebrated-kings-queens-event/>
12. NEWS <http://qns.com/story/2018/02/14/young-professionals-shine-stars-40-awards-networking-event/>
13. MOMMY BLOG <https://mommypoppins.com/newyorkcitykids/car-services-with-car-seats-in-new-york-city>

## ***YouTube***

KIDMOTO YOUTUBE PAGE: <https://goo.gl/R4VMWh>

SHARK TANK AUDITION VIDEO: <https://goo.gl/LXTc6W>

KICKSTARTKIDMOTO CROWDFUNDING VIDEO: <https://goo.gl/Scd5yw>

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