4 ways to keep kids safe in the car.



Kids are the most precious kind of cargo. Every day, parents take special precautions to ensure their safety. Even still, car crashes are a leading cause of death for children between the ages of 1 and 13, which is why our experts have identified five easy ways to help keep kids safe in the car.

1. **Consider the safest cars for families.** The U.S. News & World Report studies new cars, SUVs, and minivans each year. Their award methodology "combines professional automotive reviews, safety and reliability ratings, seating and cargo volume, and the availability of family-friendly features." No matter what make and model you choose, ensure it's equipped with necessary safety features that meet current standards.

2. **Learn how to choose and use a car seat.** Throughout their lives, kids will sit in four kinds of car seats: rear-facing, forward-facing, a booster seat, and a car seat using a seat belt. Babies start in a rear-facing infant car seat, but they'll likely outgrow that by their first birthday. When that happens, experts recommend purchasing a convertible or all-in-one car seat and using it rear-facing. Then, as the child grows, the seat will continue to accommodate them. To find the right car seat for your child, consider their age, height, and weight. For your convenience, you can use the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Car Seat Finder tool. Or, if you've already secured your seat, settle in for a few of our car seat safety tips.

3. **Don't drive distracted.** To avoid any temptation, we recommend reading our tips to steer clear of distracted driving. Knowing your route, picking your playlist, and putting your phone on do not disturb before you start driving can reduce distractions on the road. In addition, there are things you can do to keep your child from *being* a distraction. For everything from quick commutes to full road trips, put the items your child may need within arm's reach: snacks, quiet games, stuffed animals, a water bottle. If they're older, you can keep them entertained with our printable road trip games.

4. **Look before you lock.** On average, 37 children die per year due to vehicular heatstroke. Even in

cooler weather, the temperature inside a car can rise almost instantaneously. In fact, according to the NHTSA, it can increase 20°F in just 10 minutes. Make sure your child is never left unattended by remembering to look before you lock. Get in the habit of looking at every seat and ensuring they're all empty before you walk away. Another helpful tip? "Place a personal item, like a purse or briefcase, in the back seat as another reminder to look before you lock. Write a note or place a stuffed animal in the passenger's seat to remind you that a child is in the back."

5. **Look before you move.** An accident can occur when a child is out of sight of a vehicle that's backing up. As a driver, help prevent injuries or deaths by walking around your vehicle to ensure children are out of the way, using a backup assistance camera and your own eyes to look for kids, and always backing out slowly. As a parent, don't leave your child unattended around vehicles. Teach your kids not to play in or around cars, and make a rule for them to stand on the sidewalk or grass as you pull out of the driveway.

Now that you've broadened your knowledge on car safety for kids, learn what else you can do to stay safe on the road. See 14 things you should keep in your car and talk to a local, independent agent about auto insurance today.

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