

## What Is a Booster Seat?

A booster seat is a firm cushion of foam or plastic that raises the child higher in the car to improve the position and angle of the shoulder belt. (If there are no shoulder belts in the back seat of your car, skip to the bottom of the page.) There should be slots or hooks for the lap belt to keep it low, on the child's hips and thighs. There are backless, highback, and removable-back boosters. Most boosters include a shoulder belt guide or comfort clip that can be used, if necessary, to pull the shoulder belt slightly downward so it crosses the center of the shoulder and chest.

### Choosing the best booster for your child

The ideal booster has an adjustable headrest and high-density, energy-absorbing foam in the head and chest areas. To protect the neck and spine, the child's head (up to the top of the ears) must be supported by the vehicle seatback, booster, or headrest. An adjustable headrest helps keep a sleeping child positioned properly under the vehicle belt and positions the shoulder belt comfortably without preventing it from retracting properly.

Backless boosters are lightweight and inexpensive, so they are a reasonable choice for carpooling, play dates, and public distribution programs. A backless booster should not be used unless the child is able to sit upright throughout the trip and the child's head is supported by the vehicle seatback. For family trips, a backless booster can be used in the car on the way to the airport and at the destination if it is packed in a carry-on bag. Boosters may not be used on aircraft.

Combination seats, which are often marketed as "highback boosters," usually have a harness that can be used up to 40 pounds or more, then removed to convert the seat to a booster (see cautions in next section).

### How to tell if a booster fits

Try the booster with your child in your car(s). Make sure the lap belt is positioned low, touching the child's thighs and hips, and the shoulder belt crosses the middle of the child's shoulder, touching the chest.

Cautions: Some highback boosters and combination seats used as boosters have one or more of these problems:

(1) High sides that hold the lap belt above and away from the child, which may allow "submarining" (sliding downward and forward) in a crash. (2) Deep "wings" that hold the belt away from the child's shoulder, either too far forward or too far to the side. (3) For backless boosters, if the shoulder belt fits properly, it is not necessary to use the shoulder belt clip. If the clip is needed to keep the belt from scraping the neck or face, supervise the child closely, or select a different model.

### When a booster should not be used

- If your car does not have shoulder belts in the back seat, a booster seat cannot be used. (Many cars made before 1990 have only lap belts in the back seat; cars made before 2006 may not have shoulder belts in the center.)
- If your child is too large for a typical safety seat with its own harness and is less than 4-5 years old or extremely active, he or she probably is not ready to sit still in a lap and shoulder belt with a booster. You need a larger seat or a travel vest to keep the child properly seated and secured (see below).

### Large safety seats with a harness

For best protection, keep your child in a safety seat with a harness or a travel vest/harness as long as possible.

**SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.** P.O. Box 553, Altadena, CA 91003 [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org)  
310/222-6860, 800/745-SAFE (English) 310/222-6862, 800/747-SANO (Spanish)

This document was developed by SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. and may be reproduced in its entirety.  
Important: Call to check if there is a more recent version before reproducing this document.

## List of Belt-Positioning Booster Seats

No internal harness. Must be used with vehicle lap and shoulder belts. The child should be at least 4-5 years old, preferably older, and must be able to stay seated with the belts properly positioned.

### Highback Boosters with Adjustable Headrest

Recommended for best positioning of shoulder belt, to keep sleeping child placed properly in belt, and for head support in vehicles with low seatback, except as noted. Some have removable back.

Mfr.	Model Name	Child's Wt.	Features
Britax	Parkway SG, SGL, SG 2013, SGL 2013	40-120	May be used without backrest. SGL models include lower LATCH attachments. SG =SecureGuard for lap belt.
Chicco	KeyFit Strada	33-100	May be used w/o backrest (40-100 lbs.)
Clek Inc.	Oobr	33-100	May be used w/o backrest (40-100 lbs.) Includes rigid LATCH attachments.
Combi	Kobuk Air Thru	33-125	May be used without backrest.
Diono	Monterey	30-120	May be used without backrest. Includes lower LATCH attachments.
Dorel	Boost Air Protect, Auto Booster, High Rider*, Protek*, Maxi-Cosi Rodi XR*, RodiFix*, Pronto*	30-100	May be used w/o backrest (40-100 lbs.) *Must be supported by vehicle seatback.
Evenflo	Amp, RightFit	30-110	May be used w/o backrest (40-110 lbs.)
Evenflo	Big Kid, Big Kid Sport	30-100	May be used w/o backrest (40-100 lbs.)
Graco	Affix	30-100	May be used w/o backrest (40-100 lbs.)
Graco	Highback TurboBooster	30-100	May be used w/o backrest (40-100 lbs.)
Graco	Highback TurboBooster with Safety Surround	30-100	May be used w/o backrest (40-100 lbs.)
Harmony	Baby Armor, Dreamtime, V6	30-110	May be used without backrest.
Kiddy US	CruiserFix Pro	33-100	Back is not removable.
Kiddy US	Kiddy World Plus	40-110	Back is not removable. Shield only for 22-40 lbs.
Recaro	ProBooster, Performance Booster	30-120	Back is not removable.
Recaro	Vivo	30-100	Back is not removable.
Team-Tex	Dreamway, Ferrari	33-100	May be used without backrest.
Tomy	Compass Folding Boosters	30-100	Folds up for storage and travel.

### Other Highback Boosters

Back is not removable. No adjustable headrest. Do not use if shoulder belt is not touching child's shoulder and chest or if lap belt is not touching top of child's thighs. Caution: Some highback boosters have a belt guide that prevents the shoulder belt from retracting properly to take out the slack if child leans forward.

Manufacturer	Model Name	Child's Wt.	Features
Dorel	Complete Voyager	40-80	
Evenflo	Sightseer	30-100	
Gumotex	GoBooster	40-80	Inflatable booster.
Harmony	Folding Travel Booster	30-110	

**Backless Boosters** Acceptable if child's head is supported by vehicle seatback. May have belt adjuster clip/strap.

Manufacturer	Model Name	Child's Wt.	Features
BubbleBum USA	BubbleBum Booster	40-100	Inflatable booster.
Clek Inc.	Olli, Ozzi	40-120	Includes rigid LATCH attachments.
Combi	Dakota	33-100	
Diono	Santa Fe	30-120	Includes rigid LATCH attachments.
Dorel	Top Side, Stack It! BoostAPak	40-100	BoostAPak converts to back pack
Dorel	Highrise, Ambassador	30-100	
Evenflo	Amp, Amp Sport No-Back	40-110	
Evenflo	Big Kid No-Back	40-110	Also available with backrest.
Graco	Backless TurboBooster	40-100	Also available with backrest.
Graco	Connex	40-100	
Harmony	Cruz, Olympian, Transit	30-110	
Harmony	Youth Booster	30-100	
Team-Tex	HighRide, Ola, Ferrari	33-100	

Note: Integrated or add-on child restraints are available from some vehicle dealers.