

How to Get Tether Anchors Installed in Your Pre-2001 Toyota or Lexus Vehicle

SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. is collaborating with Toyota and Lexus dealers to help enhance performance of child restraint systems (CRSs) in most of their pre-2001 model year vehicles by assisting customers with installation of tether anchors. A voluntary donation to SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. of \$5 per tether certificate is requested to cover administrative costs. Additional amounts donated will be used to support Safe Ride Helpline services.

Please apply for a certificate online, if possible. You may make your voluntary donation in cash, by check, by credit card, or through PayPal.

You may download and print a certificate application to distribute to clients or members of your organization.

Sorry, but the program is not available in Hawaii or for certain models. Check with your dealer.

Why Your Child Restraint System Should Be Tethered*

A tether helps add extra protection

In a crash, a tether holds back the top of a forward-facing CRS. This is designed to help prevent serious head and neck injuries in certain types of severe collisions. A booster seat does not need a tether, because the lap-shoulder belt is designed to hold the child.

What is a top tether?

A top tether (tether strap) connects the top of a forward-facing CRS directly to the frame of the vehicle. Forward-facing CRSs sold today in the U.S. and Canada come with a tether strap. Tethers also are used with auto safety vests and CRSs with harnesses for children over 40 pounds. Most boosters and CRSs in the rear-facing position do not use tethers.

The tether for forward-facing CRSs attaches to a tether anchor in the car. At least three anchors are installed in all cars made since the 2000 model year. Anchor kits are available to be installed in most pre-2000 model year vehicles without tether anchors.

A tether is also part of a system called LATCH (“**L**ower **A**nchors and **T**ethers for **C**hildren”). LATCH connects a car seat to the car without using a safety belt. All cars and CRSs, except boosters and car beds, have LATCH starting in the 2003 model year, beginning September, 2002. Many 2001 and 2002 models also have LATCH. (See your vehicle owner’s manual.)

How should I tether a forward-facing car seat?

ALWAYS use the tether if the CRS and vehicle are equipped for tethering. If the CRS has a tether strap and the car has a tether anchor, hook the strap to the anchor and tighten it. If an older forward-facing car seat does NOT have a tether strap, call the manufacturer to find out if one can be ordered. If the car does not have an anchor, contact the dealer to get a tether anchor kit installed. For vehicles with 3 rows of seats, the CRS tether can be hooked to the vehicle belt in the row behind it. The hook attaches either to the belt latchplate (the buckle tongue) or around the buckled belt webbing.

If a tether cannot be used, the vehicle belt can hold a CRS well. Make sure the vehicle belt is in the correct place and holds the CRS tightly in place. (Check the CRS instructions and the vehicle owner’s manual.)

May I use a tether for a rear-facing seat?

A few products have a tether that may be used for rear-facing use. These can help keep the CRS more firmly installed. Use a tether for a CRS facing the rear **only** if the instructions tell you it is okay. **ALWAYS** follow the CRS instructions.

*Adapted from “A Tether Is Better,” a *Safe Ride News* publication.