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## Child Safety on Airplanes

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Did you know the safest place for your little one during turbulence or an emergency is in an approved child restraint system (CRS) or device, not on your lap?

A CRS is a hard-backed child safety seat that is approved by the government for use in both motor vehicles and aircraft.

FAA has also approved a harness-type restraint appropriate for children weighing between 22 and 44 pounds. This type of device provides an alternative to using a hard-backed seat and is approved only for use on aircraft. It is **not** approved for use in motor vehicles. [Learn more about harness-type restraint.](#)

FAA strongly urges parents and guardians to secure children in an appropriate restraint based on weight and size. Keeping a child in a CRS or device during the flight is the smart and right thing to do.

Print out this section or the [brochure](#) (PDF) to take with you when you travel.

## Cleared For Take-off

- Make sure your CRS is government approved and has "This restraint is certified for use in motor vehicles and aircraft" printed on it. Otherwise, you may be asked to check the CRS as baggage.
- Make sure a harness-type restraint is approved and has "FAA Approved in Accordance with 14CFR 21.305(d), Approved for Aircraft Use Only" on it.
- Measure the width of your CRS. It should fit in most airplane seats if it is no wider than 16 inches.
- Ask your airline for a discounted fare. Many airlines now offer discounts of up to 50 percent for children less than two years old. Buying a ticket for your child is the only way to guarantee that you will be able to use a CRS.
- Reserve adjoining seats. A CRS should be placed in a window seat so it will not block the escape path in an emergency. Do not place a CRS in an exit row.
- If you do not buy a ticket for your child, ask if your airline will allow you to use an empty seat. If your airline's policy allows this, avoid the busiest days and times to increase the likelihood of finding an empty seat next to you.
- Ask your airline if they can provide a CRS for your child. If so, you may not be permitted to bring your own CRS on board, and may need to check it as baggage.
- Arrange for your airline to help you if you need help making a connecting flight. Carrying a CRS, a child, and luggage through a busy airport can be challenging.
- Pack a bag of toys and snacks to keep your child occupied during the flight.



FAA APPROVED IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH  
14 CFR 21.305 (d)  
APPROVED FOR  
AIRCRAFT USE ONLY

The CRS must bear a label or markings showing FAA approval under Section 21.305(d) and be clearly marked FAA Approved in Accordance with 14 CFR 21.305(d), Approved for Aircraft Use Only.

### Keep Your Little One Safe When You're in the Air

Be sure the shoulder straps are properly adjusted and fasten the airplane seat belt around the CRS.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when using a CRS. FAA recommends that a child weighing:

- Less than 20 pounds use a rear-facing CRS
- From 20 to 40 pounds use a forward-facing CRS
- More than 40 pounds use an airplane seat belt
- A child may also use an alternative, such as a harness-type restraint, if it is approved by FAA. FAA has approved one restraint appropriate for children weighing between 22 and 44 pounds. This type of restraint is **not safe for use in motor vehicles**.



While booster seats and harness vests enhance safety in vehicles, FAA prohibits passengers from bringing these types of restraints on airplanes for use during taxi, take-off and landing. These restraints should be checked as baggage. Also, supplemental lap restraints or "belly belts" are not approved for use in both airplanes and vehicles in the United States.

FAA controls the approval of some but not all CRSs. Additional information is available on the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](http://www.nhtsa.gov) website.

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