10 quick child car seat checks

A good child car seat is only safe if fitted correctly. Check that you’ve chosen a safe car seat by reading our crash test reviews at which.co.uk/carseat, then make these 10 quick fitting checks to keep your child protected.

1. Is the seatbelt secure and untwisted?

2. If the seat is rearward facing, is the handlebar in the position shown in the instructions?

3. Is the car seat sitting squarely on the seat of the car and is the headrest in the correct position, as shown in the instructions?

4. Is the seatbelt following the correct red or blue route guides?

5. Is the seatbelt buckle in the right place?

6. For Isofix seats, do the visual indicators show it is fitted correctly?

7. Is your Isofix drop-down foot securely on the floor, and/or is the top tether firmly attached?

8. Have you removed any thick clothes?

9. For younger children, is the harness level with your child’s shoulders at the top, and is the harness not too tight or loose?

10. For older children, is the seatbelt across their shoulder and hips?

The seatbelt buckle must not bend around the child car seat as this could cause it to fail in a crash. Only the seatbelt fabric should be in contact with the frame.

For Isofix seats, do the visual indicators show it is fitted correctly?

Visual indicators should show you that the seat is correctly connected to the car, for example sections may turn from red to green. Check the instructions to see what this should look like for your seat.

Is the seatbelt secure and untwisted?

Is the seatbelt following the correct red or blue route guides?

Is the car seat sitting squarely on the seat of the car and is the headrest in the correct position, as shown in the instructions?

Have you removed any thick clothes?

For Isofix seats, do the visual indicators show it is fitted correctly?

Is your Isofix drop-down foot securely on the floor, and/or is the top tether firmly attached?

If you have a drop-down foot it must be firmly on the floor, not lifting the seat and not sitting on underfloor storage. The top tether must go over the back of the seat and clip into the dedicated mounting point – be careful not to attach it to luggage hooks.

Is the seatbelt following the correct red or blue route guides?

Not having the seatbelt securely fitted into the blue or red route guides will weaken the seat’s protection. Red is for forward-facing car seats, and blue is for rearward facing.

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