

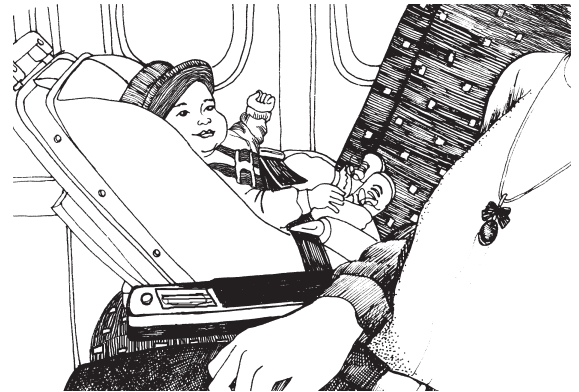
Safer Airplane Travel with Babies & Toddlers



Child
Safety
Facts
2009

Why buckle up your child in an airplane?

- A child riding on your lap would be torn from your arms in a crash or in rough air! Rough air (turbulence) is common and can happen without warning. It can cause serious injuries to people not buckled up.
- Many plane crashes are survivable. Buckling up helps you and your child avoid injury so you both can escape (page 2).
- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the American Academy of Pediatrics urge parents to buckle up all children.
- * Child safety devices (car seats and special FAA-tested devices) are tested to hold a child securely in a crash or turbulence.
- You and your child are likely to have a happier flight if the child is in a familiar, comfortable car seat.
- The car seat you use on board will be ready to use at the end of the flight. A car seat could be lost or damaged if it is checked.



You and your baby deserve the best possible protection! The FAA recommends that all passengers fly buckled up at all times.

Which safety devices can be used in airplanes?

- **Rear-facing and forward-facing car seats** with harnesses: Use one that fits your child's weight and age. Car seats must have a label saying they are certified for use in aircraft.
- **Special aircraft-only devices:** Must have label stating FAA approval. One harness (CARES) is available now.
- **Foreign car seats** for families traveling from overseas: these can be used if they meet the standards of a foreign government or the United Nations. (Check labels on the seat.)
- **Not allowed:** booster seats or vests for use in cars. NO "belly belts" made to hold a child on an adult's lap (allowed by some countries).
- **For children over age 2 without a safety device:** the lap belt must be used. A snug fit may not be possible for small, thin children. Using a safety seat or harness is always best.
- **For children who no longer fit into special devices,** lap belts must be used. The aircraft seat belt is likely to fit a child better than a lap belt in a motor vehicle. The lap belt will help restrain a child in turbulence or a crash.

Before you fly

- **Buy a ticket for your infant or child.** Look for an airline that has discounts for young children.
- The FAA strongly recommends that children under age 2 ride in a certified safety device. Not all flight personnel are well informed, so take the FAA brochure along (Resources page 2).
- The FAA requires airlines to allow the use of a car seat or aircraft-only device if the child has a ticket. Many airlines also allow use of a car seat in an empty seat.
- Make sure your child's safety device is allowed (see left).
- Have seats assigned ahead of time. Car seats should be used in window seats or the center of a wide row between two aisles. Two children and a parent can occupy three seats together. Safety devices are not allowed in exit rows or rows behind and in front of exit rows.
- A rear-facing convertible car seat may need extra space. Ask for bulkhead seats if your child rides rear-facing.

If you decide not to buy a ticket for your child under 2

- You are more likely to get a free seat and be able to use a car seat if you fly during times when planes are not full.
- Check with the airlines to make sure you can use an empty seat for your young child.
- Remember you will need a car seat after the flight.

**Make
Every Ride
A Safe Ride**



On the plane, use the safety device correctly!

- Follow manufacturer's instructions as closely as possible. Car seats with tethers can be used in aircraft without the tether anchored.
- Tighten the lap belt (see below for hints on belt tightening).
- Keep the harness buckled around your child during flight.

Hints for easier travel with kids in car seats

- For best fit in aircraft seats, use a car seat less than 16 inches wide.
- If the car seat base is wide, try raising the armrest for more space.
- To install a forward-facing car seat, first recline the aircraft seatback. Then put the belt through the car seat belt path. Turn the belt over so the buckle flap is *toward the airplane seatback*. (This allows you to release it later.) Tighten the belt and then raise the seatback.
- If two adults are traveling, one can board early and install the car seat. The child can play in the boarding area with the other adult and board later.
- Bring a pacifier or a bottle filled with water. Sucking helps keep a baby's ears from hurting during take-off and landing.
- Bring diapers, wipes, snacks, small picture books, and quiet toys.
- Getting to and from the gate: To drag a car seat, use the tether strap, not the harness. Some car seats have travel features: infant seat stroller bases; the Sit'n'Stroll convertible/stroller seat; Radian folding car seat with shoulder strap. Some car seat travel bags have wheels.
- When making flight connections, arrange with the airline in advance for help getting your children, car seats, and carry-ons to the next flight.

Why can't boosters and car safety vests be used on board?

Aircraft seats are different from motor vehicle seats. Crash tests show some automobile products will not protect children in air crashes. Harnesses that hold children on parents' laps are NOT allowed for take-off and landing, even if they claim to meet FAA standards.

- Car vests that are attached only with a lap belt allow too much forward motion. Tethers needed for other vests cannot be attached.
- A booster cannot be used in an aircraft because there is no shoulder belt. You can use a combination booster/child seat with its harness on aircraft.
- Old shield-type boosters cannot be used.

How to escape with a small child in an emergency

Emergency information cards do not include tips on escaping with a baby or young child. The FAA has done escape tests with child dummies. The safest, easiest, and fastest escape methods are:

Window exit: If escaping through a window, hand your child to another person outside before climbing out yourself.

Emergency door with slide: Hug your child to your chest with both arms (see picture, right). Put one hand behind an infant's head.

Jump into the slide. Don't sit at the top first. That could make you lose your grip on your child; people behind could push you and make you fall.

Turbulence Happens! Make sure everyone in your family is buckled up at all times during flight.

Resources

Federal Aviation Administration: tips for parents, 800-FAA-SURE (322-7873), www.faa.gov/passengers/fly_children/crs

American Academy of Pediatrics: policy statement and recommendations, www.aap.org/healthtopics/carseatsafety.cfm

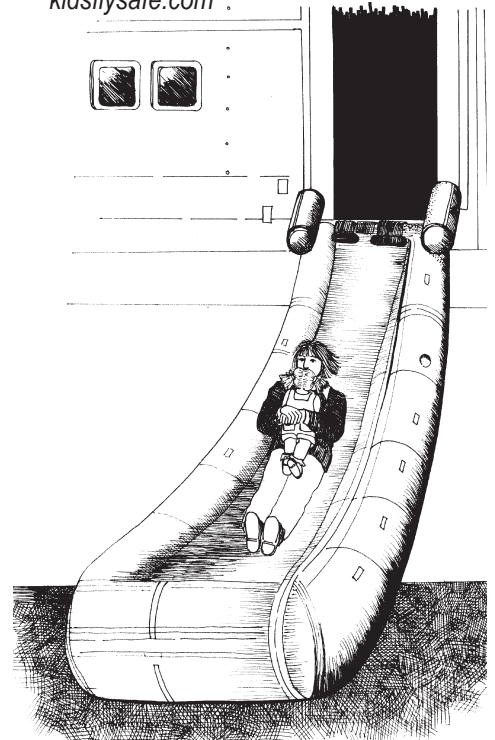
SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.: FAA regulations (copies on website); car seat use information, individual assistance, www.carseat.org, 800-745-SAFE (7233)

Flying with Kids: New Zealand website with practical travel tips (safety information not correct for USA), www.flyingwithkids.com

Sit 'n' Stroll: www.lillygold.com

Radian: Sunshine Kids, www.skjp.com

CARES: (harness for aircraft only) www.kidsfllysafe.com



Emergency escape with a small child:
Hold your child against your body,
then jump out of the exit door
onto the slide.