



Transport Canada: Expiration Dates on Child Restraints

All children’s car seats and booster seats sold in Canada have an expiry or useful life date on them, even though this is not required by regulation. Manufacturers do this to inform current owners and prospective buyers of the potential risks of using car seats and booster seats that may be missing important parts, labels or instructions and/or may have an unknown history, which could lead to less than optimal safe performance when needed. People should not use children’s car seats and booster seats past their expiry or useful life date. Beyond this date, the car seat should be permanently discarded rather than donated to a charitable organization, second hand store, or given to friends or relatives. It is also important to note that if you own a car seat or booster seat made before January 1, 2012, under Health *Canada’s Canada Consumer Product Safety Act*, you may not be able to advertise, sell, or give it away because it may not meet the latest requirements set out by Health Canada.

Manufacturers give an expiry or useful life date because over time:

- ❖ Frequent use and exposure to sunlight can damage and weaken plastic;
- ❖ Safe-use labels on the products fade or become hard to read;
- ❖ Instruction manuals have likely been lost;
- ❖ Food, cleaners, drinks and other materials that have been spilled or used on webbing, buckles, adjusters and other parts may prevent them from working safely;
- ❖ The history or condition of the car seat or booster seat becomes hard to check (was it in a crash, was it stored in a place or in a way that caused damage to parts, etc.);
- ❖ Safety regulations and standards may have changed, so safer products may now be on the market; and
- ❖ Second or subsequent owners may not get product safety recall notices if problems arise.

In Canada, all provinces and territories require infants and toddlers to be buckled up in the appropriate car seat. Several provinces also require booster seats for children who have outgrown a child car seat but are too small for a regular seat belt. The provincial and territorial laws also say that the children's car seats and booster seats must be certified to Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions. **If you don't follow the instructions or if you use them past their expiry or useful life dates - you may be putting your child’s safety at risk and you may be found guilty of breaking the law.**

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