

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:01 A.M. EDT, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2016

Thursday, Sept. 1, 2016

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VNR: Thurs. 9/1/2016, 10:30-11 a.m. EDT; repeat 1:30-2 p.m. EDT (KU) GALAXY 17
SD transponder 24/slot 3 (dl12177V) bandwidth 6 MHz; symbol rate 3.9787 FEC $\frac{3}{4}$
HD transponder 24-upper (dl12189V) bandwidth 18 MHz; symbol rate 13.235 FEC $\frac{3}{4}$

Ratings for child seat installation hardware improve after 1 year

ARLINGTON, Va. — Buckling precious cargo into a late-model vehicle has gotten a bit easier in the past year, the Institute's LATCH ease-of-use ratings show.

IIHS launched its ratings of child seat installation hardware in vehicles in June 2015. Out of 102 vehicles rated at that time, the majority were poor or marginal. Today, a total of 170 current models have been evaluated, and most are good or acceptable. Three models — the Audi Q7, Lexus RX and Toyota Prius — earn the top rating of good+, a distinction that no vehicle achieved last year.

A properly installed, age-appropriate child restraint can protect a child much better in a crash than a safety belt alone. LATCH, which stands for Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children, is intended to make it easier for caregivers to install child restraints properly. Child restraints installed with LATCH are more likely to be put in correctly than restraints installed using the vehicle safety belt, IIHS research has shown.

Even with LATCH, installation errors are common. The Institute's ratings are based on key ease-of-use criteria that have been shown to minimize mistakes.

"Frustrating child seat installations have become a familiar rite of parenthood," says Jessica Jermakian, an IIHS senior research engineer. "Unfortunately, these frustrations lead to mistakes that can have real consequences in the event of a crash. We're pleased to see automakers taking this issue seriously and making improvements in response to our ratings."

In the IIHS ratings system, LATCH hardware is considered good if it meets the following criteria:

- The lower anchors are no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch deep within the seat bight or slightly deeper if there is open access around them.
- The lower anchors are easy to maneuver around. This is defined as having a clearance angle greater than 54 degrees.
- The force required to attach a standardized tool representing a child seat connector to the lower anchors is less than 40 pounds.
- Tether anchors are on the vehicle's rear deck or on the top 85 percent of the seatback. They shouldn't be at the very bottom of the seatback, under the seat, on the ceiling or on the floor.



- The area where the tether anchor is found doesn't have any other hardware that could be confused for the tether anchor. If other hardware is present, then the tether anchor must have a clear label located within 3 inches of it.

To earn a good rating, two LATCH positions in the second row must meet all five criteria, and a third tether anchor must meet both tether criteria.

The good+ rating is for vehicles that meet the criteria for a good rating and provide additional LATCH-equipped seating positions. For a two-row vehicle, that means having a third good or acceptable LATCH seating position. The third position may use either dedicated anchors or anchors borrowed from other positions. In many vehicles that have lower anchors in the second-row outboard seating positions, LATCH can be used in the center position by “borrowing” one anchor from each side. Some vehicles have one dedicated anchor for the center seat and rely on a borrowed anchor for the other side.

For a three-row vehicle to earn a good+ rating, it must have one additional good or acceptable LATCH position (without borrowing) and tether anchors in all rear seating positions. The additional tether anchors must meet at least one of the two tether anchor criteria. If the vehicle has a second-row center seating position, it must have good or acceptable LATCH there (with or without borrowing).

The good+ designation is intended to encourage manufacturers to give parents greater flexibility when seating children in a vehicle.

“We’re especially interested in making it possible for more parents to use LATCH in the second-row center position,” Jermakian says. “Parents are repeatedly told that is the safest place for children to ride, so we want them to have the option of an easy installation there.”

The second-row center is safest because it is far from the hard surfaces of the vehicle interior and from the striking vehicle in a side crash. However, a properly restrained child is very safe in any rear seating position.

See the following two pages for the full list of current LATCH ratings.

For more information, go to iihs.org

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety is an independent, nonprofit scientific and educational organization dedicated to reducing the losses — deaths, injuries and property damage — from crashes on the nation's roads. The Institute is wholly supported by auto insurers.



| Current LATCH ratings | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>All models are 2016 unless otherwise noted.</i> | | | |
| <i>Listed rating is the highest available for the most popular seat covering within the vehicle class.</i> | | | |
| Good+ | | | |
| Audi Q7 (2017) | Lexus RX | Toyota Prius | |
| Good | | | |
| Audi A4 (2017) | BMW 5 series | Mercedes-Benz GL-Class | |
| Audi A6 | Mercedes-Benz C-Class | Mercedes-Benz GLE-Class | |
| BMW 2 series | Mercedes-Benz E-Class | Volkswagen Passat | |
| Acceptable | | | |
| Acura ILX | Dodge Dart | Hyundai Santa Fe Sport (2017) | Mazda CX-5 |
| Acura MDX | Dodge Durango | Hyundai Tucson | Mazda CX-9 |
| Acura RDX | Dodge Grand Caravan | Hyundai Veloster | Mini Cooper Countryman |
| Audi A3 | Ford Edge | Jeep Cherokee | Mitsubishi Outlander |
| Audi Q3 | Ford Expedition | Jeep Compass | Mitsubishi Outlander Sport |
| BMW X1 | Ford Explorer | Jeep Patriot | Nissan Juke |
| Buick Enclave | Ford Flex | Kia Forte | Nissan Maxima |
| Buick Encore | Ford Focus hatchback | Kia Optima | Nissan Murano |
| Cadillac XT5 (2017) | Ford Focus sedan | Kia Sedona | Nissan Pathfinder |
| Chevrolet Cruze Limited | Ford Taurus | Kia Sorento (2017) | Nissan Versa |
| Chevrolet Equinox | GMC Terrain | Kia Soul | Toyota Avalon |
| Chevrolet Impala | GMC Yukon XL | Kia Sportage (2017) | Toyota Camry |
| Chevrolet Malibu Limited | Honda Accord sedan | Lexus ES 350 built after 8/15 | Toyota Corolla |
| Chevrolet Spark | Honda Civic sedan | Lexus GX 460 | Toyota Sienna built after 3/16 |
| Chevrolet Tahoe | Honda Civic coupe | Lincoln MKX | Volkswagen Golf |
| Chevrolet Traverse | Honda Odyssey | Lincoln MKZ | Volkswagen Tiguan |
| Chevrolet Trax | Honda Pilot | Mazda 3 hatchback | Volvo S60 |
| Chrysler 300 | Hyundai Elantra (2017) | Mazda 3 sedan | Volvo V60 |
| Chrysler Town & Country | Hyundai Santa Fe (2017) | Mazda CX-3 | Volvo XC90 |
| Dodge Challenger | | | |



| Marginal | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Acura TLX | Dodge Journey | Jeep Wrangler 2-door | Scion FR-S |
| Audi Q5 | Fiat 500X | Jeep Wrangler 4-door | Scion iA |
| BMW 3 series | Ford C-Max Hybrid | Kia Rio | Subaru Crosstrek |
| BMW X3 | Ford Escape (2017) | Lexus CT 200h | Subaru Forester |
| BMW X5 | Ford F-150 crew cab | Lexus IS | Subaru Impreza |
| Buick Envision | Ford F-150 extended cab | Lexus NX | Subaru Legacy |
| Buick LaCrosse | Ford Fusion (2017) | Lexus RC | Subaru Outback |
| Cadillac CTS | Ford Mustang | Lincoln Navigator | Subaru WRX |
| Cadillac Escalade ESV | GMC Acadia | Mazda 6 | Toyota 4Runner |
| Cadillac SRX | Honda Accord coupe | Mini Cooper | Toyota Highlander |
| Chevrolet Camaro | Honda CR-V | Nissan Altima | Toyota Prius c |
| Chevrolet Malibu | Honda HR-V | Nissan Frontier crew cab | Toyota Prius v built after 1/16 |
| Chevrolet Silverado 1500 ext. cab | Hyundai Accent sedan | Nissan Leaf | Toyota RAV4 |
| Chevrolet Sonic | Hyundai Genesis | Nissan Quest | Toyota Tundra crew cab built after 4/16 |
| Chevrolet Suburban | Hyundai Sonata | Nissan Rogue | Toyota Tundra extended cab built after 2/16 |
| Chevrolet Volt (2017) | Infiniti QX60 | Nissan Sentra | Volkswagen CC |
| Chrysler 200 | Jeep Grand Cherokee | Ram 1500 crew cab | Volkswagen Jetta |
| Chrysler Pacifica (2017) built after 8/16 | Jeep Renegade | Ram 1500 extended cab | Volvo XC60 |
| Dodge Charger | | | |
| Poor | | | |
| Chevrolet Silverado 1500 crew cab | Ford Fiesta sedan | Hyundai Accent hatchback | Infiniti QX50 |
| Ford Fiesta hatchback | GMC Sierra 1500 crew cab | Infiniti Q70 | Subaru BRZ |

