

Helping mature drivers
find their safest fit.





What exactly is CarFit?

CarFit is a program designed to ensure that you and your vehicle are working well together. It involves a quick 20-minute inspection by a trained CarFit Technician who will help adjust your vehicle to your needs, and may also involve the services of a professional occupational therapist who specializes in driver training. The goal of CarFit is to help keep you driving safely for many years to come.





Safe driving begins with you.

Canadians are living longer and driving longer. In fact, nearly 2.7 million drivers over the age of 65 are on Canada's roads today.* Increased traffic congestion, longer commutes, new technology and faster speeds are making driving more challenging than ever. Making sure you fit your vehicle in order to drive safely is more critical than ever. CarFit can help.

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*According to Transport Canada, 2013

We change as we age. And that can change our driving.

As we age, changes in vision, flexibility, strength, range of motion, height and even medication can make us less comfortable and confident behind the wheel. Fortunately, many automakers are designing vehicles to meet the needs of mature drivers with features such as more precise seating adjustments, clearer dashboard displays, wider doors, precise seat controls, night vision technology and even adjustable gas and brake pedals. All of these innovations can go a long way in making you feel more confident behind the wheel.



CarFit can put you on the road to safer driving.

Take advantage of a CarFit clinic offered in your community to see how well you and your vehicle work together. A trained CarFit Technician will ask you several simple questions and complete a 12-point checklist. The entire 20-minute process will lead to recommended car adjustments and adaptations, a list of local resources in your area and greater peace of mind.

Please note, CarFit clinics are not available in all areas.

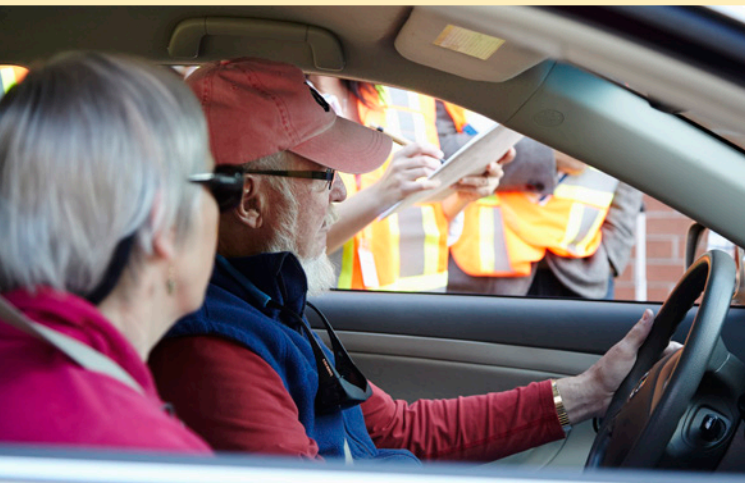
Do you and your vehicle fit together?

A CarFit Technician will know.



A good fit means you have:

- A clear line of sight over the steering wheel. Your line of sight should be at least three inches above the top of the steering wheel.
- Plenty of room between your breastbone and the air bag in the steering wheel. The distance should be at least 10 inches to allow adequate room for the air bag to safely deploy.
- A seat that fits you comfortably. Each time you drive, remember to adjust the seat for good visibility and easy access to vehicle controls.
- A properly adjusted head restraint. The centre of the restraint should be about three inches from the centre of the back of your head, not against your neck.
- Easy access to gas and brake pedals. You should be able to reach the vehicle's pedals without stretching, and be able to completely depress the brake pedal. You also should be able to move your foot easily between pedals without lifting your foot.
- A seat belt that holds you in the proper position and stays comfortable as you drive. Your lap belt should fit low and tight across the hips and pelvis, not on the stomach area that contains soft tissue. The shoulder belt should cross the collar and breastbones but away from the neck, fitting snugly across the chest. The shoulder belt should never be behind your back or under your arm.



You also should be able to:

- Reach the shoulder belt, and buckle and unbuckle the seat belt without difficulty.
- Get into and out of your vehicle easily.
- Sit comfortably, without knee, back, hip, neck or shoulder stiffness or pain.
- Turn your head to look over your shoulder and check the vehicle's blind spots.

Position mirrors to minimize blind spots.

Many collisions involve merging and lane changing. Proper mirror use can give you the side and rear vision that is required for safe driving, greatly reducing blind spots and increasing confidence on the road.

Before starting your vehicle, make the following adjustments:

1. Adjust the interior rearview mirror to show as much of the rear window as possible.
2. Place your head near the left window and adjust the left side-view mirror so you can just see the side of your vehicle.
3. Position your head near the middle of the vehicle, above the centre console, and adjust the right side-view mirror so you can just see the side of your vehicle.



Adaptive devices can help.

If you find that your vehicle is not a perfect fit, a variety of adaptive features can be added to help make it fit you a little better.

Some of these devices are simple and readily available; other devices and adaptations require the advice of an occupational therapy driver rehabilitation specialist. Consult a professional in your area for specific device recommendations.



Simple adaptive devices can include:

- Seat belt extenders to reduce distance to reach or rotate (available from vehicle manufacturer).
- Visor extenders for added protection from sun or glare.
- Steering wheel covers to ease grip or protect hands from extreme hot or cold.

Adaptive devices requiring expert advice and training can include:

- Larger, panoramic rearview and side-view mirrors to help extend the view.
- Pedal extenders to reposition gas and brake pedals within reach.
- Leverage handles to assist in opening car doors.
- Hand controls to move brake and gas controls from non-functioning feet to hands.
- Seat lifts to ease getting out of a car.
- A spinner knob on the steering wheel to make turns easier or more efficient.
- Chair lifts and carrying devices for managing wheelchairs or scooters.
- Seat and back support cushions to relieve back pain or improve line of sight.

Cushions must be considered with a degree of caution; the added padding can affect the fit of the seat belt, mirror views outside your vehicle and even contact with the gas and brake pedals.

Many occupational therapists are highly trained to evaluate and provide solutions for drivers with physical and visual challenges. These professionals can ensure you get the right equipment, have it properly installed and receive proper training before you take to the road.



Helping steer the way for safe, mature drivers.

The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) in partnership with the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) have worked together to bring CarFit to Canada.

The program was initially developed by the American Automobile Association (AAA), AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA).

Contact your local occupational therapy practitioner or visit [caasco.com/carfit](https://www.caasco.com/carfit) for more information on how to maintain and strengthen your driving health.

CAOT is a national member-based association representing occupational therapists in Canada. With over 15,000 practicing occupational therapists, CAOT provides leadership to actively develop and promote the client-centred profession of occupational therapy in Canada and internationally. Visit [caot.ca](https://www.caot.ca) to learn more.

For more information on senior driving,
visit caasco.com/seniordriving.



Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
Association canadienne des ergothérapeutes



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