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Product Review: Clek Booster Seat

By Glen Konoroski

Magna Aftermarket (yes, it's the same Canadian company that makes parts for new automobiles) has teamed up with Auto21, a research group that works on health and safety related items, to design a new booster seat.

It's called the Clek, so-named by the children who first saw the booster seat for the sound it makes when securing it to the tethers. To quote the manufacturers, the Clek is "designed for kids and engineered for parents". What this means is that they have developed a seat that is very easy to use, move from car to car and comfortable for children to sit in.

Looking over the Clek for the first time, you will see that it is sort of a smaller sized bottom seat cushion with two small brackets protruding from either side the rear of the seat. These two protruding brackets have latches on them so that they can be clipped into place with ring tethers mounted under the upper seat cushion (on all cars and SUV's made after 2001).

To mount the Clek, you just place it on the rear seat where there is a seat belt and push it back towards the upper rear seat cushion where it latches to the two tethers. When releasing the Clek, two finger triggers mounted to the brackets at the back of the seat release the latches holding it to the tethers. While playing around with the Clek, I found it easy to move about and mount in seconds.

Like most good booster seats the Clek moves the child up 10 cm so that the seatbelt is positioned properly on a child's smaller body. Two C-shaped belt guides built into the lower rear section of the Clek allow the seatbelt to be laid across the lap of the child for better positioning so that it does not crush the spine in the event of an accident. By raising the child, the shoulder belt is placed appropriately on the body when the child is sitting in the seat as well.

As for durability, the material covering the Clek is of the same automotive grade material used in many new vehicles that can stand up to a lot of abuse. But unlike car seats, the cover of the Clek can be removed and washed when needed. In fact optional seat covers are offered for the Clek allowing for personalized seating - handy if you have more than one child to move about. One other nice feature I noted about the seat and its cover is a pocket that is sewn in the left front side that can hold small items if needed.

Those of you with vehicles pre-2002, without the tethers can use the Clek as well. In this case, the Clek is placed on the seat and the lower seatbelt pushed through the C-shaped anchors.

NOTE: Booster seats are recommended for children under 8 who weigh more than 18 kg but less than 36 kg (40-80 lbs) and who stand less than 145 cm (4 ft. 9 in.). Booster seats are required in Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec, and it is anticipated that similar laws will be adopted nationwide.

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