

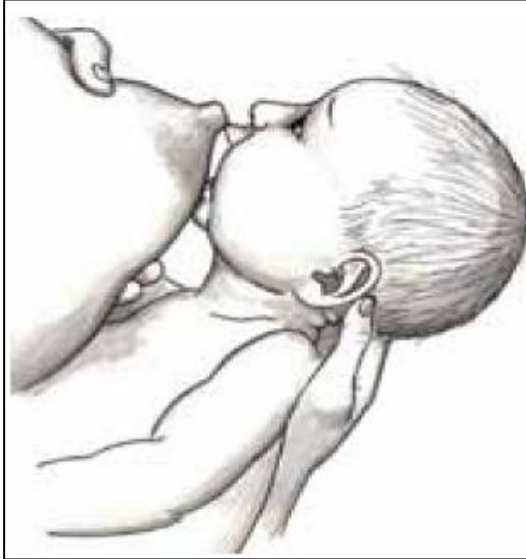


IABLE

Institute for the Advancement
of Breastfeeding & Lactation Education






Positioning to Help Your Baby Latch Well






Infants have instincts that enable them latch to the breast and feed. However, this does not mean that all babies will latch well.

Positioning in a way that your baby is comfortable will help your baby latch. You may need to experiment to see which positions work the best for you and your baby. Here are a few hints that may help no matter what position is used:

- **Babies latch better when calm.** Put your baby to your breast when the baby is showing feeding cues, before the baby is overly hungry. Early feeding cues include the baby bringing their hands to their mouths, rooting, sticking their tongue out, and seeming restless. Once the baby is crying due to being overly hungry, latch can be more difficult. If the baby is at that point, place the baby skin to skin, or allow the baby to suck on your finger to calm the baby before latching.
- Support your baby's back (spine), neck, and the base of the head behind the ears rather than the back of baby's head, as you can see in the picture above. Babies have a hard time latching when pressure on the back of the head pushes the baby into the breast.
- Position baby so that the chin touches the breast first and the nipple touches the upper lip. This is called [asymmetric latch](#). This helps the baby open wide, as you can see in the picture above. When the baby's mouth is open wide, the baby will latch deeply, which prevents nipple trauma, and ensures that the baby can remove milk well.

Position	Tips on Positioning	When to Try This
<p data-bbox="261 264 402 291">Cradle Hold</p> 	<ul data-bbox="634 268 1029 806" style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit comfortably with your back resting on the back of the chair or another surface. • Use pillows behind your back or in your lap for positioning comfort as needed. • Hold baby across your lap with baby's neck and shoulders resting on your forearm on the side you are feeding on. • Use your other arm to help position your breast to get a comfortable latch. 	<ul data-bbox="1110 268 1507 422" style="list-style-type: none"> • Newborns latching well. • Older babies, especially after 3 months when they have stronger neck control.
<p data-bbox="225 833 440 861">Cross Cradle Hold</p> 	<ul data-bbox="634 840 1029 1289" style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit comfortably with your back resting on the back of a chair or another surface. • When latching on the left side, support baby's back, neck and base of the head behind the ears with your R hand and arm. The baby should be snug between your arm and your chest. • Use your left hand to support your breast. 	<ul data-bbox="1110 840 1511 993" style="list-style-type: none"> • Newborns, especially when premature or very small. • Difficulty getting a deep latch for mom or baby.
<p data-bbox="212 1335 456 1415">Football, Clutch, or Under the Arm Hold</p> 	<ul data-bbox="634 1339 1029 1654" style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit comfortably with your back resting on the back of a chair or another surface. • Tuck your baby under your arm, so that the baby is snug between your arm and body. • Use pillows under the baby to help you hold the baby. 	<p data-bbox="1062 1339 1133 1367">Mom:</p> <ul data-bbox="1110 1392 1333 1472" style="list-style-type: none"> • Cesarean birth • Large Breasts <p data-bbox="1062 1497 1133 1524">Baby:</p> <ul data-bbox="1110 1549 1406 1577" style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight neck/torticollis

<p>Koala Hold or Australian Hold</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit upright in a comfortable place. • Hold baby straddling your thigh while facing you, in an upright position. • This is a tricky hold in the first few months because of the infant's lack of head control. 	<p>Mom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forceful letdown <p>Baby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent spit ups/reflux
<p>Side Lying</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay comfortably on your side with pillows for support. • Position baby lying on their side and facing you with their face at the level of your breast. • Help support your breast near baby's mouth. • Draw your baby close to get a deep latch. 	<p>Mom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overproduction of milk • Strong letdown • Large Breasts
<p>Laid back positioning with Self Attachment</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially lie back (about 45°) in a reclined position with pillows behind you for comfort. • Place your baby skin-to-skin on your chest. Baby should just be in a diaper. • Gently rest your arms supportively around your baby. • Allow your baby to move to one side, and search for the breast. You will need to provide support for the baby the entire time to prevent the baby from falling. Your baby will use his natural rooting and moving reflexes to find the breast and latch. 	<p>Mom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any time! <p>Baby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young infants with difficulty latching

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Believe it Will Happen!

Babies tend to improve their latch skills as they mature and grow. Some babies will latch better when you try a different position. Other babies may simply need more time. Not all babies begin crawling or walking at the same age. As such, not all babies are skillful and effective feeders at the breast at the time of birth.

If your baby is not latching well, find lactation help!

In the meantime, you need to do 2 things- Remove milk from your breasts regularly to maintain milk production, and feed the milk to your baby (add donor milk or formula if you are not able to express enough for your baby). You can use a pump or hand express to remove milk, aiming for milk removal at least every 3 hours during the day with no more than a 5 hour break overnight.