

# SAFER SLEEP

## from day one

Safer sleep for  
expectant parents



the  
lullaby  
trust

# It's never too early to start preparing a safe sleep space for your baby's arrival.

Knowing safer sleep advice is vital, and now is a great time to learn. Thanks to this advice, rates of sudden infant death syndrome have come down significantly.



**The safest place for a baby to sleep is in their own clear, flat, separate sleep space, such as a cot or Moses basket in the same room as you.**

You might be thinking about decorating a nursery for your baby, but there is no rush as babies should stay in the same room as you for the first six months for sleep, **day and night**. This doesn't mean you can't leave the room to make a cup of tea or go to the toilet, but for most of the time when they are sleeping, they are safest if you are close by.

All babies should have their own clear, flat, separate sleep space, such as a cot or Moses basket in the same room as you.

If you don't have space for a cot, or you want something you can easily move to a different room, a portable sleep space such as a Moses basket or travel cot is a handy purchase. Whatever you buy, check that it is suitable for overnight sleeping.

**Babies should sleep in the same room as you for the first 6 months. It is important to follow safer sleep advice until your baby is 1 year old, particularly for the first 3 months as they are more vulnerable.**



# WHAT DOES MY BABY NEED?

With so many products on the market, it can be overwhelming to know what to buy for your baby. However, you don't need to buy lots of products or spend more on expensive things. There are just a few essentials we recommend you buy.



## Mattresses

The mattress needs to be firm, entirely flat, and waterproof. The surface of the mattress should be firm enough that when your baby is placed on it, their head does not sink in more than a few millimetres, as this could be a risk for overheating and suffocation. Make sure the mattress is the correct size for your baby's sleep space.



## Bedding

All your baby needs to sleep is a sheet or lightweight blanket that is tucked under the mattress and not above shoulders or a baby sleep bag. If you use a sleeping bag, make sure it is the correct size.



## Room Thermometer

The ideal temperature of a baby's room is 16-20°C. A room thermometer will be helpful in keeping an eye on how hot or cold your baby's room is.



## Car seats

Car seats are essential for safety when travelling, but babies should not sleep in a car seat for long periods of time. This is because many car seats don't allow baby to lie flat, which can mean that their head may flop down making it harder for them breathe easily. If your baby changes their position and slumps forward, take them out of the car seat and sit them upright before continuing on your journey.

Shopping for a baby can be expensive, so don't forget that second-hand products are always an option. Whether you're gifted these items from family and friends or shop online, make sure you get instructions and that the product is in good condition with no broken parts.

See our product guide for more info.

Unfortunately, not all products available in the shops and online comply with safer sleep advice. So, it's a good idea to familiarise yourself with the items we recommend you DO NOT buy for your baby:



Pods or nests



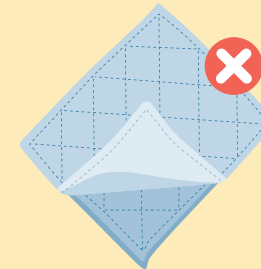
Pillows, duvets or thick heavy bedding



Cot bumpers



Hammocks



Weighted blankets, weighted swaddles and weighted sleeping bags



Sleep positioners

Download our free Product Guide to learn more.



# CO-SLEEPING

Follow this advice every time you bring your baby into bed with you, even if you don't plan to fall asleep. That way if you co-sleep intentionally or unplanned this will reduce some of the risks

1

Keep pillows and adult bedding away from your baby or any other items that could cover their head or cause them to overheat.

2

Follow all The Lullaby Trust's other safer sleep advice to reduce the risk of SIDS such as sleeping baby on their back.

3

To reduce the risk of accidents, do not bring other children or pets into bed with you.

4

Make sure that baby can not be trapped or wedged between the mattress and the wall or fall out of bed.

5

Never leave your baby unattended in an adult bed.



Whether you choose to co-sleep or it is unplanned, there are some **key risks you should avoid**.

**Co-sleeping with your baby is very dangerous if:**

- ✗ you or anyone sharing the bed has recently drunk any alcohol
- ✗ you or anyone sharing the bed has taken any drugs or medication that make you feel sleepy
- ✗ you or anyone sharing the bed is a smoker
- ✗ your baby was born prematurely (before 37 weeks of pregnancy) or weighed under 2.5kg or 5½ lbs when they were born.

For more info visit [www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/premature-babies/](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/premature-babies/)

In these scenarios, it is **always** best to put baby in their own safe sleep space, such as a cot or Moses basket. Keeping the cot or Moses basket next to your bed might make this easier.

**Never fall asleep on a sofa or armchair with your baby. The risk of SIDS is 50 times higher for babies when they sleep on a sofa or armchair with an adult. They are also at risk of accidental death as they can easily slip into a position where they are trapped and can't breathe.**



If you are co-sleeping with your baby, you should consider **any** risks before **every** sleep. It is easy for your situation to change if you are unwell or have drunk any alcohol. Always make sure you have somewhere separate to put your baby to sleep in those circumstances.

# PREMATURE AND LOW BIRTH WEIGHT BABIES

You may already know if your baby is likely to be premature or low birth weight. Babies who are born prematurely (before 37 weeks) or who weighed less than 5.5lbs (2.5kgs) at birth have a greater chance of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Breastfeeding your baby, keeping them smoke free, and following all our safer sleep advice will help to reduce the risk.

Premature babies are sometimes slept on their front in hospital for special medical reasons. When they are getting ready to go home babies should always sleep on their back to reduce the risk of sudden infant death. Be careful when using anything that doesn't allow them to lie flat such as slings or car seats which can mean that their head may flop down making it harder for them to breathe easily. Babies should not stay in a car seat for long periods, this is particularly important for premature babies.

**If you choose to use a sling or baby-carrier, it is very important that you follow the TICKS guidelines\*:**

- T** Tight
- I** In view at all times
- C** Close enough to kiss
- K** Keep chin off the chest
- S** Supported back

This is to ensure that your baby's airway is kept clear, and so you can check that they are able to breathe easily and are not overheating

\*Used with permission of the UK Sling Consortium



**For more information on safer sleep for premature babies visit**

<https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/premature-babies/> (Use QR code)



# KEEPING BABY SMOKE FREE

**Smoking during pregnancy or after birth can significantly increase the chance of SIDS for your baby.**

Even if you smoke during pregnancy, you should still try not to expose your baby to smoke after birth as this can help reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome. Keep your baby out of smoky areas and don't let others smoke around your baby.

For help and advice to stop smoking, you can talk to your midwife. You could also try the NHS Smoking Helpline on 0800 0224 332 or visit the NHS website

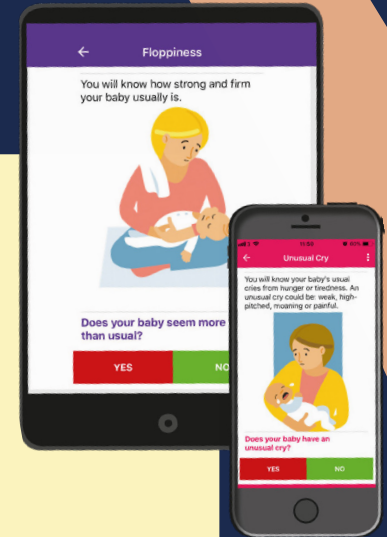


## BABY CHECK APP

Is my baby really ill?

Download our Baby Check app free from Google Play or the App Store.

The app features simple checks that can be done if your baby is unwell to help you determine how ill your baby is.



# WHAT ABOUT MY SLEEP?

There's no getting around the fact that having a new baby means you won't be getting hours of uninterrupted sleep. Sleep deprivation in the early days can be really hard but it doesn't last and things will improve.

New babies wake around every 2 hours to feed. As they grow, they will be able to go for longer stretches. Every baby is different though so there is no normal pattern and it can be unhelpful to compare yourself to others. As tempting as it might be to try anything that might encourage your baby to sleep for longer it is really important to follow the ABCs of safer sleep for every sleep to reduce the risk of SIDS. Always sleep your baby on their back in a clear cot or sleep space.

## For further info visit

<https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice/coping-with-sleep-deprivation-as-a-new-parent/>



# THE ABCs OF SAFER SLEEP



Always sleep baby...



...on their back...



...in a clear, flat, separate sleep space

This work was supported by the  
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We hope this helps. If you have any questions or concerns about safer sleep, please do not hesitate to contact **The Lullaby Trust** on **0808 802 6869** or **info@lullabytrust.org.uk**

You can also follow us on **Instagram**, **Twitter** and **Facebook** where you can message us with any questions you have **@lullabytrust**



### **Brought to you by The Lullaby Trust**

The Lullaby Trust provides expert advice on safer sleep for babies, supports bereaved families and raises awareness on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

[www.lullabytrust.org.uk](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)

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**We have access to translation services**

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