

Positions for Breastfeeding

Written by [Laurel Haring](#) Sunday, May 18 2008 16:24

Necessity sure can be the mother of invention when it comes to breastfeeding. It's a good thing to know a variety of positions in which you can nurse your baby, just in case you need to change things up. When it's time to nurse your baby, it's nice to have options on how you hold him. As you become more experienced, the different positions will become a part of your repertoire; some you may use all the time and others you may only use once in a while.

Regardless of which position you're using, be sure that whatever position you're in, you're comfortable. Also, always, always bring the baby to your breast, not the other way around; your back will thank you.

Here are some of the positions you can use to nurse your child.

Cradle Hold

Sit comfortably and hold the baby so that she is on her side facing you, with her head resting on your forearm or in the crook of your arm. You need to be belly to belly. Pull the baby in close to nurse. If your letdown is particularly forceful, you can position baby so that her head and neck are higher than your nipple. Good for all babies, especially good for babies with Down syndrome or low muscle tone.

Football Hold (aka Clutch Hold)

If you just think about the way football players hold the ball when they're running, you'll be able to visualize how this hold will work for nursing. Sit comfortably and hold the baby so that his body is tucked under your arm at your side, with his head resting on your forearm or the crook of your arm. He should be on his side, with his legs slightly flexed around your side; you need to position him so that his belly is directly facing you. Pull the baby in close to nurse. Good for all babies, especially good to try if your baby has a cleft lip and/or palate.

Side-Lying Hold

As you'd guess, this hold is done while you're lying down. You and your baby are facing each other and are belly to belly. She can be supported from the back by your forearm, a pillow, or a rolled up towel, blanket, or shirt. If you've had a cesarean section, you can protect your incision by placing a rolled up towel, blanket, or shirt between you and the baby's feet. Good for all babies ... and great for moms who've had a c-section and those who'd like a little rest while nursing.

Slide-Over Hold

This position is done by nursing (or starting nursing) from one breast, then sliding baby over to nurse at the other breast without changing his position. Good for babies who prefer one breast to the other.

Transitional Hold

When a baby has low muscle tone or a weak suck or rooting reflex (for example, a preemie), the transitional hold helps the baby stay on the breast more easily. Sit comfortably and hold the baby so that she is on her side facing you (belly to belly). Using the arm on the side of your body *opposite* the one where baby will be nursing, position your arm along baby's legs, bottom, and back, placing your palm on the back of her head; use your other hand to support your nursing breast. Since her head should be level with your nipple, you may need to place baby on a pillow. Be sure to bring her in to you. Good for premature infants or babies with a weak suck or rooting reflex. May not work well for other babies.

These are just some of the many positions you can use to nurse your baby. There is no "right" way to hold your baby to nurse. The "right" way to nurse is the way (or ways) that works for you both.

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<http://www.typeamom.net/positions-for-breastfeeding.html>