



Top 4 Comfortable Breastfeeding Positions

You will spend a lot of time breastfeeding your newborn. It's worth the effort to find a position that is comfortable for both you and your baby.

The following breastfeeding positions have worked for other moms. Feel free to experiment and find what works for you. After a bit of practice, you may even invent your own!

Feel free to print out this ebook to keep on hand while you're breastfeeding your newborn.

1. Laid Back Breastfeeding Position

The 'laid back' position can work well when you and your baby are first learning to breastfeed. It is a relaxed position that helps to prevent muscle tension in your upper back and shoulders.

How to do it:

- Find a comfortable place where you can lean back and relax. Lean back far enough so that gravity will help to keep baby close to your body. Use pillows to support your head and back as needed.
- Baby's entire body should rest against your body with his cheek resting near your bare breast.
- Use your arms to support your baby in whatever way feels most comfortable.
- Your baby will lift his head and use his arms and legs to reposition himself until he finds the nipple. Some babies will need more help than others; use gentle guidance to nudge your baby towards the breast if needed. Remember, it takes practice to make any position work for you and your baby.

In the first few days of life, this position works best when both mom and baby are skin-to-skin (no shirt for mom, baby dressed in a diaper only). This helps to encourage baby's natural feeding instincts.



2. Cross Cradle Breastfeeding Position

The cross cradle hold can also be helpful when you are learning to breastfeed. Premature babies or babies with lower muscle tone can benefit from the extra support this position provides.

How to do it:

- Sit comfortably with your feet supported on the floor or a low stool.
- Place a pillow on your lap to support baby at the level of your breast. This will help to prevent your arm from getting tired.
- Turn baby on his side with his entire body facing you. His tummy should be tucked against your stomach with his ear, shoulder and hip in a straight line. (To understand why this is important, try drinking a glass of water with your head turned to the side.)
- If you are nursing from your right breast, lay your left arm along your baby's back with your hand resting between baby's shoulders. Support the base of baby's head, your thumb on one side and your index finger on the other side. (Avoid holding the back of your baby's head, as most babies will react by pushing away from the breast.)
- Adjust baby's position so that his nose is near your nipple and his chin is resting on the breast.
- Support your breast with the other hand with your thumb and fingers well back from the areola (the brown part surrounding the nipple).
- Keep baby's bottom close to you to prevent him from slipping away from the breast.

If your baby needs extra help with latching, try this trick:

- Gently shape or "sandwich" the breast, using your thumb and fingers. (Imagine eating a large sandwich; it is easier to fit into your mouth if it is flattened first.) Please note: you sandwich the breast to help it fit into baby's mouth. The flattened part of the "sandwich" should be parallel to baby's lips.
- Encourage baby to open wide by tickling his upper lip with your nipple. In response, your baby will lift his chin and gape widely. Aim the nipple towards the roof of baby's mouth. Baby's chin should touch the breast first.
- If your baby is crying or upset, calm him and then try again.
- Try to get baby's bottom lip as far as possible from the base of the nipple. The lips should be flanged outwards when latched.

Once baby consistently latches well, you will no longer need to use the cross cradle hold. You can simply cradle your baby in the crook of your arm for feeds.



3. Football or “Clutch” Breastfeeding Position

The football position works well for large breasted women. It can also be comfortable for those who have had a Cesarean section as it keeps baby’s weight away from the surgical site.

How to do it:

- Sit in a comfortable chair with your feet supported on the floor or a low stool.
- Use pillows stacked at your side to support baby at breast level. If you find baby’s feet push against the back of the chair, put a pillow behind your back. This will move your body forward and give a bit more space for baby’s legs.
- Tuck baby’s body against your own, legs tucked under your arm.
- Support baby with your hand between the shoulder blades.
- Hold baby’s head with your thumb on one side and your fingers on the opposite side, just behind baby’s ears.
- Use your other hand to support your breast.
- Position your baby so that his nose is near your nipple and his chin is resting on your breast. Your baby will need to tilt his head slightly and gape widely to latch.
- When baby’s mouth is wide open, you can gently guide baby onto the breast with the palm of your hand.

Side Lying Breastfeeding Position

Breastfeeding while lying down can be very helpful when you are tired or if your bottom is still sore from childbirth.

How to do it:

- Get comfortable lying on your side with a pillow under your head and another behind your back. Some moms also like a pillow between their knees for comfort.
- Allow your breast to be supported by the bed. You may need to lean back slightly so your nipple will be at a comfortable height for latching.
- Lay your baby on his side, facing you and tucked close to your body. Baby’s lower body will be touching your tummy. A rolled up blanket behind baby’s back will help to keep him close.
- Position him so that his nose is opposite your nipple. Baby’s chin should touch your breast. Baby will gape and latch to the breast.
- When baby is ready for the second breast, reposition yourself onto the other side.

