

Using a Ring Sling

Make sure you and your baby are feeling calm, content and happy before trying your sling the first few times. Take your time to practise and allow your baby time to get used to being in the sling. You could also practise by using a teddy or doll, and checking in the mirror is useful.

The first few times your baby is in the sling, it is a good idea to take a walk to allow them to settle and get used to it.

Key Points to Remember

1. Ensure a good 'seat' is created for your baby by tucking a good amount of fabric up under her bum and ensuring the fabric is spread knee pit to knee pit. Your baby should be in a spread-squat or 'M' position, with her knees at the same height or higher than her bottom/hips, to provide optimal positioning for knee and hip joints.
2. You should be able to kiss the top of your baby's head when she is on your front; if she is too low it may strain your back.
3. Ensure the carrier is tightened enough, supporting baby's back so that they do not slump or curl into a ball. Untie and re-tighten if you feel your baby is leaning too far away from your body or has slumped down in the carrier.
4. Make sure baby's face is not pressed in to your chest; you can gently turn their head to the side so their cheek rests against your chest should they fall asleep.



Threading the Ring Sling

You should only need to do this once. Just make sure the fabric is evenly spaced, across it's width, through the rings and that it is not twisted or bunched.



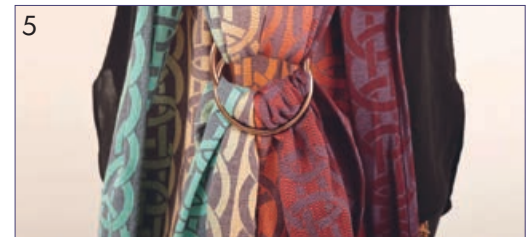
1 Take the rings in one hand and the loose end of fabric in the other.



2 Feed the loose end of fabric through both rings.



3 Lift the upper ring, pass the fabric over the upper ring and under the lower ring



5 Pull the fabric through. one strand at a time ensuring there is no twisting or bunching. This will make it easier to adjust later.

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The first few times you use your ring sling, take time to make adjustments - you will soon learn the little tweaks required to make it nice and comfy for you both.

Pass the sling over your head and one arm; the rings will sit on the opposite side from your child. Ensure the rings are sitting just below your shoulder and that the fabric going over your shoulder and back is well spread and not twisted. Tighten enough to make a snug pouch ready for your baby to go in.



Rest your baby against you, holding him securely. Pass his legs through the fabric and out the other side. He should be in a spread-squat position with the fabric going knee-pit to knee-pit. Tighten the fabric to make a secure seat, then allow his weight to rest on the fabric. If the rings have moved down your body, slightly lift him so you can slide the fabric round to move the rings back up again.



Spread the fabric up his back to the base of his neck whilst you support him. Check his seat - tuck some fabric under his bum and spread it knee-pit to knee-pit. Make sure he is in a good seated position with knees level with the hips, or higher. Move any 'slack' in the fabric towards the rings ready to tighten. The fabric should be distributed with roughly one third around upper back/occiput, one third over back and one third under his hips and bum.

Place your hand under baby's bum to lift him a little so that you can adjust the fabric easily. Now start to pull the fabric through the rings so it feels nice and secure. Rather than pulling in a downwards motion, lift up and over. This helps keep the rings in the correct position, just below the hollow area in front of the shoulder. Tighten by pulling small 'sections' of fabric at a time out radially from the ring centre, keeping the fabric spread evenly within the rings. These small adjustments can make a big difference to your comfort.

Especially focus on tightening the upper third of the sling so that your baby is drawn in closely to you, and ensure the middle third and bottom third are snug too. Make sure the fabric is still well spread out over your back and your shoulder.



To take baby out: Lift the upper ring to allow some fabric to slide through, loosening the pouch. Lower the fabric under his shoulders and hold him around the waist. Lift your baby up, rest him on your shoulder and bring his legs out.

- Read all instructions before assembling and using the sling.
- Use common sense when using a sling: your baby's safety is your responsibility.
- Check your sling for any signs of wear and tear before each use. Stop using immediately if you notice any damage.
- Keep infant's face free of obstructions at all times and allow for head movement.
- Ensure that your baby has a good air supply, that there is no fabric over his/her face or mouth, and their chin is not resting directly on their chest – there should be at least two finger widths of free space between chin and chest. Premature infants, infants with respiratory problems, and infants under 4 months are at greatest risk of suffocation.
- Be aware of your baby's body heat when using a sling and avoid overheating. The carrier provides extra layers of fabric and therefore warmth for you both as you share each other's body heat. You will probably need a layer or two less clothing than normal, but make sure your child has something warm for their legs and feet if necessary.
- Ensure your baby's head is well supported.
- Always tie securely with a double knot.
- Ensure proper placement of child in product including leg positioning.
- Never use a sling while your balance or mobility is impaired. Do not use while exercising, while drowsy, or with medication that could affect your ability to care for your child.
- Never use a sling while engaging in activities where your child could come to harm, such as cooking with a heat source, or cleaning where exposure to chemicals may occur.
- Never wear a sling while driving or being a passenger in a motor vehicle.
- Do not use in place of a car seat.
- Do not operate machinery, drive a vehicle or ride a bike when using a carrier.
- Do not leave a carrier around your child unsupervised.
- We do not recommend back carries until your child has good head control and is at least 4 months old.
- Do not position your child in the carrier so that their body is facing away from you.
- Take care when leaning forward - support your baby's head and bend at the knees, not at the waist.

Please visit the following websites for more carrier safety information:

<http://www.naturalmamas.co.uk/blog/sling-safety-with-younger-babies/>

<http://www.slingguide.co.uk/safetyadvice.php>

<http://www.naturalmamas.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/TICKS2.pdf>