

Safer sleep in winter

the
lullaby
trust





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We know that the colder months can be difficult for families

You may be worried about the costs of living, and have to make difficult choices for you and your family. Or you may be worried about paying your heating bills. You may be concerned about trying to keep your home warm, keeping draughts out and keeping your baby warm.

The recommended room **temperature for a baby's sleep space is 16-20°C.**

This can be harder to maintain in the colder months. It can be tempting to wrap your baby up to keep them warm, however we know that overheating a baby increases the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS, previously known as cot death).

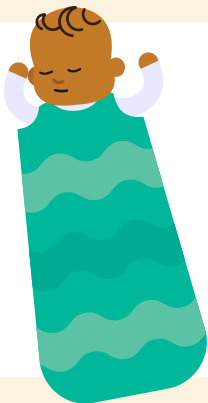


Things to consider for your baby and their sleep space during the colder months

Bedding for cots/cribs/moses baskets

Sleep your baby in the feet-to-foot position with their feet at the bottom of the cot. Firmly tuck in sheets and blankets (no higher than the shoulders), this reduces the risk of your baby's head becoming covered by loose bedding.

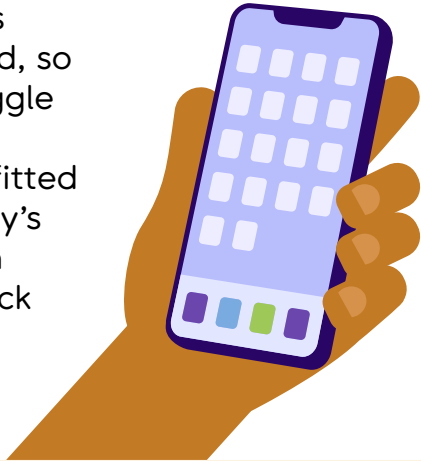
Babies' heads are an important way for them to lose heat if they need to, so remove hats when inside.



If you are using a baby sleeping bag, don't add extra blankets on top. Instead, add an extra layer of clothing or choose a higher tog sleeping bag if you feel the sleeping bag is not enough.

Check the manufacturer's guidelines for the baby sleeping bag that you choose. You can choose different togs for different seasons to help keep your baby at the right temperature

Baby sleeping bags should be well fitted, so the baby can't wriggle down inside. Most sleeping bags are fitted according to a baby's weight, rather than age, so always check the manufacturer's guidelines.



If you use sheets and/or blankets, we recommend using a lightweight blanket instead of thick, fleecy or padded blankets or duvets. If you think your baby is cold, add an extra lightweight blanket or layer of clothing.

Bedding and bed sharing

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

However, we know that many parents find themselves sharing a bed with their baby whether they mean to or not. Therefore, it's important to follow this advice. A baby sleeping bag is advisable when bed sharing.

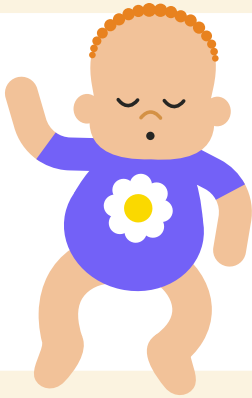
Remember that the warmth generated by an adult in the same bed as a baby may create a warmer environment, so **adjust bedding and/or clothing for your baby accordingly.**

When bed sharing, keep all adult bedding or any other items that could obstruct your baby's breathing or cause them to overheat, away from the baby.

This includes any belts or cords from clothing. Keep adult bedding at your waist height and add an extra layer of clothing if you are cold.

Don't be tempted to put your baby under adult bedding to keep them warm.





Follow all our other safer sleep advice to reduce the risk of SIDS. Place babies on their back for every sleep. In a clear, flat, firm sleep space. Keep them smoke free day and night.

To reduce the risk of accidents, **do not bring other children or pets into bed with you if you choose to bed share with your baby.**

Make sure your **baby won't fall out of bed or get trapped between the mattress and the wall.**

Remove slatted or decorated headboards.

Babies should never be left alone in an adult bed. If there is not an adult in bed with them then place your baby in their own separate sleep space. As your baby develops, becomes more mobile and can move around, the risks can change, so we recommend checking your bed regularly to prevent possible accidents.



When not to co-sleep

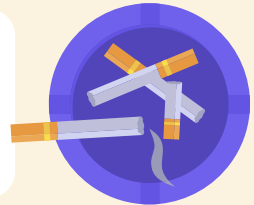
Whether you choose to co-sleep or you fall asleep together unplanned, there are some key times to avoid co-sleeping.

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



You or anyone in the bed has recently drunk any **alcohol**

You or anyone in the bed **smokes** or the baby was exposed to smoking in pregnancy



You or anyone in the bed has taken any **drugs or medication** that make you feel sleepy

Your **baby was born prematurely** (before 37 weeks of pregnancy) or **weighed under 2.5kg or 5.5 pounds when they were born.**



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

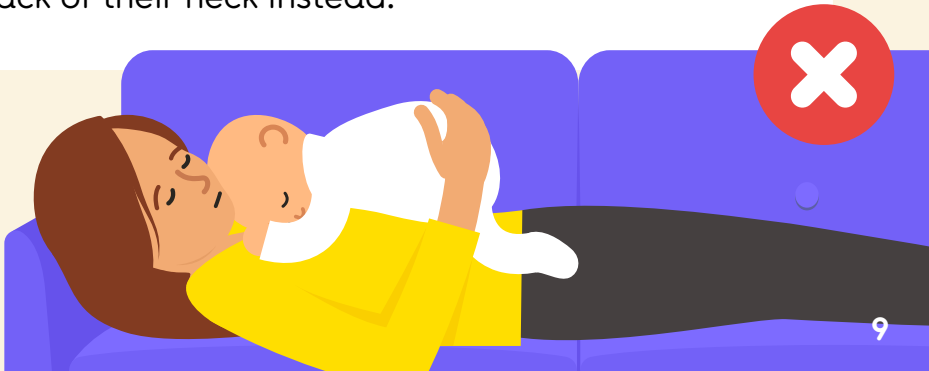
Never sleep on a sofa or armchair with your baby as this can significantly increase their risk of SIDS. They are also at risk of accidental death, as they can easily slip into a position where they are trapped and can't breathe.

We would not advise using products like swings and baby bouncers as sleep spaces as they are not firm and flat.

Babies shouldn't lie on or have anything soft around them, particularly their heads, as this can cause them to overheat and increases the risk of SIDS. Soft, squishy materials could become pressed against a baby's mouth and nose and could interfere with breathing.

How can I check if my baby is too hot?

We recommend checking your baby's chest or the back of their neck to check their temperature. It's fine if they feel warm, but if they are sweaty or clammy it means they are too hot, so remove a layer of bedding or clothing. Their hands and feet will usually be cooler, so check their chest or back of their neck instead.



What we don't recommend:



Avoid the following in your baby's sleep space to lower the risk of accidents and overheating.

Hot water bottles

Don't use hot water bottles in any baby sleep space (cot, crib, Moses basket or adult bed) as they can make your baby too hot.

Weighted bedding

Weighted swaddles, blankets and sleeping bags are not recommended for babies under 1 year as there is a risk of overheating and head covering.

Cot bumpers

Cot bumpers can pose the risk of accidents to babies and toddlers.

Sleeping in hats, hoods or outdoor clothing

Babies lose heat through their heads, so remove your baby's hats or hoods when indoors or in a car so they don't get too hot. When they're sleeping indoors, remove any outdoor clothes.

Placing baby's cot near a radiator

Make sure your baby's cot is away from any radiators and other heat sources. If you're using another heat source like a portable heater, direct it away from your baby. Babies can't regulate their own temperature so they could get too hot.

Wherever your baby's sleep space is, keep it clear, keep it simple, keep it safe.



When babies feel unwell, with a cold or high temperature (fever), they may be warmer than usual. Your baby should be dressed appropriately for their environment, it is important not to feel tempted to wrap an unwell baby up more than usual.

If your baby has a fever or you are worried about your baby you should call your GP or 111. If your baby shows signs of being significantly unwell always seek medical advice. Please visit the NHS for more advice:

[nhs.uk/symptoms/fever-in-children/](https://www.nhs.uk/symptoms/fever-in-children/)

You may also find it helpful to use our

Baby Check app

The app features 17 simple checks to do if your baby has symptoms. The app then works out a score to let you know if it's time to seek help.

Trust your instincts and if you are very worried, dial NHS 111 or 999, or visit an emergency department.



Download our
Baby Check app.



Where can I find financial support?

If you're worried about how you will pay your bills or buy food, do seek help as there are organisations who are there to support you.

- **National debt helpline.** They have a team of expert debt advisers who will help you to take control of your debts.
- **Stepchange.** Stepchange support people to become debt free and can guide you if you need help with energy bills.
- **Trussell.** Trussell are an anti-poverty charity and community of food banks. They provide food and practical support to people left without enough money to live on.
- **Baby Bank Alliance.** If you need baby items, you can get help from a baby bank. A baby bank is like a food bank but for baby essentials. Find a baby bank near you on the Baby Bank Alliance website.



**For every baby.
For every family.
Forever.**

**More baby safety
information can be found
at: [lullabytrust.org.uk](https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk)
T: 020 7802 3200**