

## Baby Slings - Why You Need One

Looking for a great first baby carrier? Then consider one of the best things ever to happen to parenthood - a baby sling. A baby sling is a baby carrier made out of fabric that wraps around the wearer's body from his or her shoulder to opposite hip and back up to the shoulder, creating a pocket for the baby to sit or lie down. Very common in many cultures around the world, the use of baby slings, or "baby wearing" as it is sometimes called, is gaining popularity in the United States as parents are realizing the many benefits associated with baby slings.

**Benefits of Baby Slings**

- \* Baby slings are "hands-free." They allow your baby to be with you at all times when you are running errands or tending to chores around the house.
- \* The baby finds comfort in the sling environment which simulates the pressure, motion and warmth sensations they experienced before birth in the womb.
- \* Slings are great bonding tools for fathers, grandparents and other caregivers.
- \* Slings may aid in reducing crying and colic, and lower the baby's stress hormones.
- \* Slings often make it easier to nurse in public.
- \* A baby sling can be used for newborns and babies up to 35 lbs. One of the more popular types of baby slings is the pouch sling, also referred to as the tube or pocket sling, where the baby is carried in a semi-prone position. This type of sling often fits around one arm, with baby hanging at about stomach level. There are other types of slings which can be worn like a backpack, with the baby facing in or facing out. Using a baby sling is often more convenient than trying to carry your baby around in his or her car seat, and much easier on the back. A baby sling also provides a great way to carry your baby around if you don't want to pack a bulky stroller.

**Padded or Unpadded?** Padded or unpadded, that is the question many parents must decide, and there are pros and cons to both. Many parents like padded slings because they give their baby's head some support, and feels more comfortable on the shoulders. Many parents dislike padded slings because they feel padding makes the sling too bulky, and keeps the sling from being adjusted very tightly because the padding won't move through the rings. They also like unpadded slings because they are more easily shared between two people of different sizes. One option would be to choose a lightly padded baby sling which gives support to the baby's head, yet lightly padded enough to slip through the rings.

**Popular Brands of Baby Slings**

Popular brands of baby slings include Maya Wrap, The Peanut Shell, Moby Wrap, and Hotslings, and will generally cost in the neighborhood of \$35 to \$70. For hot summer days you might want to check out slings made out of Solarveil™, a breathable material with UV protection, blocking out 95% of the sun's harmful rays. You can also use the Solarveil™ sling in the pool, shower or beach.

**Baby Sling Tips**

When using baby slings, it's important to keep the following in mind:

- \* A baby sling should not be used instead of a car seat or other infant protection device.
- \* Do wear your baby in a carrier while cooking at the stove or oven, as there is the risk of hot substances splashing on your baby.
- \* Always keep one hand on your baby when bending over, to prevent your baby from accidentally falling out.
- \* Remember that babies can be bumped by doorways or sharp corners, so be aware of those things while walking with your baby

## About the Author

Shari Hearn is a writer and creator of [Expecting Baby](#) website, where you can read about such things as [2007 MacLaren Stroller](#) review.

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