How to hold a newborn

**Picking up a newborn baby**

Take care with your newborn’s head, especially around the fontanelles. Always support your newborn’s head and neck.

To pick up baby, slide one hand under baby’s head and neck and the other hand under their bottom. Bend your knees to protect your back.

Once you’ve got a good hold, scoop up your baby and bring baby close to your chest as you straighten your legs again.

**Holding a baby and cradling a baby**

Make sure your baby’s head is resting against your chest. Slide your hand up from baby’s bottom to support their neck.

Gently move your baby’s head to the crook of your arm, still supporting baby’s neck. Place your other hand under baby’s bottom.

Using the cradle hold lets you look at your baby. You can smile and talk to baby.

**Shoulder hold and safety tips**

**Shoulder hold**: rest baby on your chest and shoulder, supporting baby’s head and neck with your hand. Place your other hand under baby’s bottom.

**Keep your baby safe**: never hold hot drinks or cook while you’re holding baby. Always hold baby securely when going up or down steps.

Help children and older people if they want to hold your baby. Ask them to sit down, then gently place baby in their cradled arms.

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