

# Top tips for increasing your chances of successful breastfeeding:

**Be as prepared as you can be** – visit the [feedgood.scot](http://feedgood.scot) website and read your copy of *Off to a Good Start*: All you need to know about breastfeeding.

**Skin to skin at birth** – unless you or the baby are unwell prioritise this between mum and baby until your baby feeds. If your baby is sleepy don't panic: give them lots of skin contact and hand express your milk until they waken.

**Feed your baby responsively** – whenever your baby shows feeding cues or just to comfort them. Feed for as long and often as the baby wants, if you feel your breasts filling or if you think the baby has slept too long. You cannot spoil a baby!

**Be patient, practice the basic the skills** – this takes time for you both but it's much easier once you get the hang of positioning and attachment.

**Avoid giving anything other than your breast milk** – particularly in the early days as this can affect your milk production. Babies usually waken and feed frequently around 24 hours after the birth to stimulate your supply. Sometimes it seems like a lot of feeding but it's normal and will settle down.

**If you are in difficulty don't give up, get determined and get help instead** – visit [feedgood.scot](http://feedgood.scot) website, call the helpline 0300 100 0212, midwife or health visitor. Go to a local breastfeeding support group or if you have contacts for local peer supporters then call one. Breastfeeding is worth the effort!

**FEEDGOOD.SCOT**  
NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING  
HELPLINE: 0300 100 0212



## How do I **express by hand**?

### Step 1

Start off by encouraging your milk to flow – being near your baby will help. To express by hand, start by gently massaging your breast and nipple to stimulate the hormones needed to release milk.



### Step 2

Position your thumb and fingers in a 'C' shape, 2 to 3 cm back from the base of your nipple.



### Step 3

Gently press and release, press and release, and keep repeating until your milk starts to flow. This may take a few minutes.



### Step 4

When the flow slows down, move your fingers round to a different part of your breast and start again. If your baby only feeds from one breast, you could express from the other.



# Positioning and attachment

Babies know instinctively how to attach themselves to the breast to feed, but mums can help by holding (positioning) their babies in a way that helps them do this. In the early days, it's good to spend some time with your baby working out the best position for you both.

How you hold your baby ('positioning') and how your baby attaches to your breast ('attachment' or 'latching-on') can make the difference between a pain-free, comfortable feed where your baby gets enough milk, and one which is painful for you and frustrating for your baby. Your midwife will show you how to do this, but these pages will act as a helpful reminder.

You can also find out more about positioning and attachment on the [feedgood.scot](http://feedgood.scot) website.

## Step 1 held close

**Your baby needs to be held close during breastfeeding.** This means she doesn't have to stretch to reach your breast and it will also be more comfortable for you.

Her head, neck, chest and hips should all face the same direction to ensure she comes to your breast at the right angle. This also encourages her to tilt her head back – it is difficult for her to swallow if her body is twisted.

Her nose should be level with your nipple, so that when she tilts her head back to feed, your nipple can safely reach the back of her mouth.



**Every mum and baby is different and you will find a position that is comfortable for you both.**

## Step 2 head free

**Just before she attaches,** her head should be free, so you can support her behind her neck and shoulders. She will instinctively tilt her head back. This will allow her to open her mouth wide, lead in with her chin and get a good mouthful of breast.

Remember – you should bring her swiftly to your breast (not the other way round). Her tongue and lower lip should make contact with your breast first.



**Make sure you ask for help if you need it.**

## Step 3 mouth open

**Her mouth should be wide open.** Her chin should be touching your breast, and her cheeks should be full and rounded.

If any of your areola (the darker area around your nipple) is visible, more should be seen above her top lip than below her bottom lip.

Some mums experience initial discomfort for a few seconds but this should fade quickly and breastfeeding should not be sore. When your baby is well attached you will notice her rhythmic sucking, swallows and pauses during her feed.



It's important for your baby to be properly attached. This means she will get enough milk and the risk of developing problems will be reduced.

Reproduced by courtesy of Health Scotland from "Off to a Good Start: all you need to know about breastfeeding".