

Safe sleep on the go

There will be times when you will be travelling, visiting family such as your baby's grandparents or just out for a short adventure. Any time you plan to be away from home, it's important to plan ahead and make sure that your baby has a safe place to sleep. The safest place for your baby to sleep is a crib, cradle or bassinet that meets current Canadian safety regulations.

Playpens

In Canada, playpens are not recommended for unsupervised sleep because they're not as durable and safe as cribs. However, if assembled correctly, bassinet attachments on playpens are a safe option for your baby until they can roll over or reach the attachment's weight limit, whichever comes first. The change table accessory is not the same as a bassinet attachment. It's not a safe place for your baby to sleep.

If you use a playpen temporarily for sleep while travelling, you can take some steps to make your baby's sleep safer:

- Place the playpen on the floor and in the same room that you will be sleeping in.
- Place the playpen away from hazards like windows, blind cords, patio doors, lamps, electrical cords and small objects.
- Use a baby monitor so you can check on your baby often.

To avoid suffocation risks, do **not**:

- place the playpen too close to your bed as your bedding may fall in
- add an extra mattress or padding to the playpen
- add soft items, bedding and toys while your baby is sleeping



Bed sharing

Parents or caregivers may consider bed sharing while travelling, especially if they discover there is no crib, cradle or bassinet available at their destination. Bed sharing increases your baby's risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and suffocation, especially during baby's first 4 months.

Learn the steps you can take to help your baby sleep safely:

- **Safe sleep for your baby**

Travel bassinets

New types of products and designs come onto the market regularly, such as travel bassinets. Many are designed to make sleep easier and more convenient for parents and caregivers.

Remember that to be safe for sleep, a travel bassinet must meet current Canadian regulations.

When on the go or even if using your travel bassinet at home, it's important to place it in a safe space.

Your travel bassinet can conform to soft or uneven surfaces. Placing your travel bassinet on beds, sofas and armchairs can increase your baby's risk of suffocation.

Follow these tips:

- Make sure that your baby's sleep surface is hard and flat.
- Place your baby's travel bassinet on the floor to prevent injuries from falls.
- Make sure that other children and pets can't access your baby or place any unsafe items in the bassinet or next to your baby.

Products not meant for sleep

Babies fall asleep often while busy parents are on the go. If your baby falls asleep in a stroller, sling, carrier or car seat, transfer them to a safe sleep space once you reach your destination.

Sleeping in a stroller, sling, carrier or car seat can put your baby in positions that make it difficult to breathe.

Also, remember to take off your baby's snowsuit, raincoat, jacket and other outerwear once indoors to reduce the risk of suffocation or overheating.



Strollers and carriages

Strollers and carriages are great for getting around, but they are not designed to be safe for sleep. When you're out walking, running errands or visiting friends and family, check on your baby frequently while they're in their stroller or carriage, especially if they fall asleep.



Stroller accessories

Some strollers include attachments that look like a bassinet and seem safe and comfortable for your baby to sleep. However, not all stroller accessories are safe for sleep.

If your stroller accessory is marketed as a bassinet, it must meet [Canadian safety regulations](#).

Your stroller accessory may not be safe for sleep if:

- the sleep surface isn't flat
 - this places your baby on an incline and can make it difficult for your baby to breathe
- the accessory has straps or a restraint system
 - these could strangle your baby
- the accessory has handles that can fall inside the bassinet attachment
 - these become a strangulation hazard
- the accessory is not stable when removed from the stroller frame
 - this could tip over

Slings and carriers

Slings and carriers are a great way to keep your baby close and happy while you're on the go.

However, babies have suffocated in them, so it's important to use them safely. Check on your baby often, especially if they fall asleep in your sling or carrier.

Car seats

Babies often fall asleep in car seats. Remember that car seats are designed for safe travel, not for sleep.

Move your baby to a safe sleep space even if your baby is sleeping soundly when you arrive at your destination.



Considerations if your baby is premature or born with certain medical conditions:

Premature babies or those born with certain medical conditions may have poor neck control. They are at higher risk of suffocation in a car seat. When your baby's head falls forward, it limits the amount of air that they can take in. It would be similar to trying to drink through a pinched straw.

Talk to your doctor before taking your baby on a long car ride. Make sure that your baby is big enough and strong enough to ride safely in their car seat.

Take these steps to make your premature baby safer in their car seat:

- Keep a close eye on your baby. If possible, have an adult sit in the back seat and check on your baby often.
- Limit the time your baby spends in the car. Try to avoid car rides that are longer than 30 minutes.
- Make sure your car seat fits your baby. Check the manufacturer's guidelines and make sure the harness straps are snug.

Do not:

- add extra padding or head supports that do not come with the car seat, as your baby can suffocate on these items
- use car seat head straps, as they can lead to strangulation and suffocation

Learn more:

canada.ca/safesleep