

# Babywearing Tips

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By Christine Gross-Loh

1. Try several types of carriers. Different ones serve different purposes. In the US, many parents get the Baby Bjorn, Snuggli, or some other type of vertical front carrier. I highly recommend buying or borrowing a few other types as well. I consider the sling to be all-purpose, the Baby Bjorn or Sara's Ride good for heavy-duty shopping, the Korean blanket carrier nice for regular housework, and the Baby Trekker favorable for more strenuous activities. Each has its pros and cons, and you'll be able to figure out what suits you only through experimenting. Because of my small build, not all slings work for me; many are too cumbersome and full of padding. My favorite is the Rosado sling, but I've also started sewing my own to better meet my needs. The Maya Wrap, an unpadded sling, is popular with many parents and comes in gorgeous fabrics. As Benjamin gets older, I'll be using a frame backpack for long excursions.

2. Be persistent, start early, and try the carrier again if it doesn't seem to work out at first. I had great success with a sling for the first few weeks, but after that, Benjamin went through a stage where he didn't seem to like it. I tried the sling a few weeks later and it worked well for us again. Depending on the baby's head control and your own proficiency with different positions, some carriers will work at some times and not at others. I had the Baby Trekker for a month before I figured out how Benjamin liked to be carried in it. And I was not comfortable with the Korean blanket while Benjamin was a very tiny newborn. I recommend trying out a new carrier just after your baby has been fed and is in a good mood; this will make the experience smoother for both of you.

3. Wear your baby high with both the sling and vertical front packs like the Baby Bjorn. This prevents back discomfort and allows you to carry a much heavier burden.

4. Get expert help. I felt a bit odd carrying Benjamin around in a sling when no other mothers in my community were doing so, but then I went to a La Leche League meeting and encountered many sling-wearers. From their examples and hands-on advice, I was able to master several different carrying positions. The Baby Book by William and Martha Sears (Little, Brown Co., 1993) has some great advice and diagrams on babywearing, but there's nothing quite like having another mother help you out. Relatives and friends taught me how to use the Korean blanket carrier, after which I felt instantly connected to the generations of mothers who had used it.

5. Go on-line. There are lots of resources with information about baby carrying. Here are just a few:

[www.babytrekker.com](http://www.babytrekker.com) - The Baby Trekker

[www.elizabethlee.com](http://www.elizabethlee.com) - Elizabeth Lee Designs (sells sling patterns and sling rings if you would like to sew your own)

[home.flash.net/~pburch/carriersFAQ.html](http://home.flash.net/~pburch/carriersFAQ.html) - Baby Carriers FAQ (last updated in 1996, but still a good source of feedback on different carriers)

[www.kangarookorner.com](http://www.kangarookorner.com) - Kangaroo Korner

[www.mayawrap.com](http://www.mayawrap.com) - Maya Wrap

[www.naturalchild.com/quest/laura\\_simeon.html](http://www.naturalchild.com/quest/laura_simeon.html) - The Natural Child Project, "Ten Reasons to Wear Your Baby" (a wonderful piece on the benefits of babywearing, with good references and links)

[www.rosadosling.com](http://www.rosadosling.com) - The Rosado Sling

[www.toughtraveler.com](http://www.toughtraveler.com) - Tough Traveler

[www.wearsthebaby.com](http://www.wearsthebaby.com) - Wears the Baby

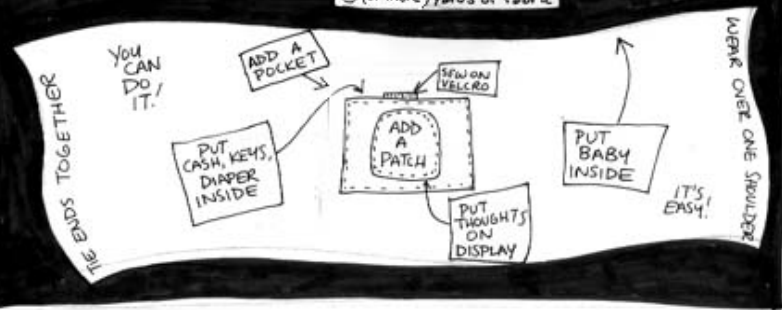
6. Teach others how to use your carriers. My husband enjoys using a fleece sling or a frame backpack to carry Benjamin; my mother puts him on her back. Our occasional mother's helper has learned that having Benjamin close to her guarantees a fuss-free afternoon and a nap. As for Benjamin, he hardly notices which one of us is carrying him.

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3 (or more) yards of fabric



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