

... Snuggle Hold - Continued

While still supporting baby, tighten the sling by pulling the tail.

Pull the outside of the tail, just below the rings to tighten the inner edge or rail of the pouch, and pull the inside of the tail to tighten the outer edge or rail.

Make sure the sling has been tightened enough to support baby sufficiently and keep baby secure.

Very young babies can look a bit squished in a sling - generally though babies love this closeness and security, its similar to swaddling your baby. Combined with your movement, the correctly tightened sling creates a womb like environment for baby.

Handy Hint: For a very small baby you may like to place one or two folded flat cloth nappies or similar in the sling to raise them up so they are not lost in the deep pocket.



Tummy to tummy - Newborn to 6 months

Some babies prefer to be held upright rather than lying down, this is especially true of colicky or reflux babies.

This is also a great position for visual contact with your baby and promotes a strong bond with baby.

Begin by holding baby over the opposite shoulder to the rings, as if you were going to burp them.

Slide baby down and open the sling with your other hand forming a pouch. While supporting baby's weight tighten the sling by pulling the tail.

Pull the lower edge of the sling behind baby's knees and cup their bottom, or fold legs inside sling for newborn.

For a newborn pull the upper rail or edge over their head for support. For a baby with neck control cup their shoulders with the upper rail or edge or tightly under arms for older babies.



9 month old Hanah in Buddha Carry



2 year old Xander On the Back



11 month old Hanah in Tummy to Tummy



18 month old Yemaya in Hip Carry

Buddha Carry - 4 months to 1 year

This position is for babies who have neck control and like to see the world pass them by.

Hold the pouch open as if you were going to put baby in lying down, but instead cross baby's legs in front of their body and place baby in the sling in a sitting position, facing out.

Take care that baby is in a pocket with the inner edge of the sling between your tummy and baby's back.

While supporting baby's weight tighten the sling by pulling the tail.

You may want to tighten the outer rail to keep baby secure. Do this by pulling the edge of the tail on the inner side just below the rings.



Hip Carry - 6 months to 3 years

This will quickly become your favorite position for an older baby, it can be used as soon as your baby can sit up.

It mimics the natural carrying position yet alleviates strain on your arms.

An older child can also breastfeed in this position.

Begin by holding baby over the opposite shoulder to the rings.

Slide baby down feeding their feet through the sling, creating a pocket for baby's bottom. Baby's legs can then straddle your hip.

The top of the sling should either come over baby's shoulders or tightly under their arms.

It is a good rule of thumb to make sure baby's knees are higher than their bottom.

On the Back - 10 months to 3 years

The back carry position is for older babies and experienced slingers.

Put the sling on with the rings slightly behind your shoulder.

Put your baby in the sling in the hip carry position then carefully slide your baby under your arm and around to your back.

To adjust the sling in this position you can lean forward taking baby's weight and then pull the tail of sling.

Until you are used to this position you should always have a second person check to ensure that your baby is secure, or check in the mirror if you are on your own.

Remember that your baby is not tied or strapped into the sling, please use this position only with a cooperative child. Of course babies are carried this way in many traditional societies and have been for centuries without mishap.





Putting it on -

You can wear your Mbeleko on either shoulder so decide which side you prefer. If you want baby on your left side you will need the sling to be on your right shoulder - vice versa to wear baby on your right. It is a good idea to swap sides sometimes to avoid strain.



Hold the sling at the rings making sure the tail is at the front.



Place your left arm through the sling and bring the sling over your head.



Rest your Mbeleko on your right shoulder with the rings just in front of your shoulder.



It is important for your comfort that you have the sling spread over your shoulder, and wide across your back thereby spreading the weight and preventing the sling from digging into your neck.

You can adjust your Mbeleko by pulling the tail through the rings, the longer the tail the pouch, the shorter the tail the larger the pouch - smaller people and babies have longer tails and larger people and toddlers have shorter tails.

To take your Mbeleko off, pull the top ring up and away from your body, thereby loosening the sling enough to get baby out whilst maintaining your customised fit.

If baby falls asleep in the sling and you would like to put him down, it is best to do so by keeping baby in the sling and lying him on the bed by leaning over yourself. Then gently back out of the sling and bring it over your head.

Caring for your Mbeleko -

Here at Mbeleko we use the highest quality fabrics, soft and delicate to nurture your baby, be it our 100% cotton poplins, silk brocades, vintage cottons, or hand printed cotton. Each Mbeleko is pre-washed in the highest quality, hypoallergenic, fragrance free detergent. Our anodised aluminum rings are designed specifically for use in baby slings and are pre-tested to withstand 150 kilograms.

Your Mbeleko is hand crafted with love. We suggest you treat it with love and look after it as you would a favorite item of clothing. We recommend that you wash your Mbeleko in cold water by hand or on the gentle cycle in your washing machine, and dry naturally on the clothesline. Depending on the fabrics and trims used in your particular Mbeleko it may require an iron after washing. You may use a warm to hot iron on all cotton Mbeleko's and a cool iron on any silk trims or brocade.

www.mbeleko.com.au

Snuggle Hold - Newborn to 6 months +

When you place your newborn in your Mbeleko support baby's head until the sling has been tightened enough to provide sufficient support.

Baby can have her head on either side of the sling, nestled in under the rings or cuddled in on the open side of the sling.

This is an excellent position for breastfeeding baby. When you do so, you can drape the tail of the sling over yourself and baby for discretion, if you choose.

Begin by pulling up the inner side of the sling against your chest to create a deep, secure pouch.

Open the pouch with one hand while holding baby in the other arm. Set baby in the sling, with the head on either side. Support the head and weight carefully.



Continued Overleaf...

Using the Mbeleko is very easy but it does require a little practice and patience at first. Once you've mastered it, using the Mbeleko will become second nature; you will be able to put your baby in quickly, securely and comfortably.

At first your baby might take time to get used to the sling. We suggest you practice when baby is fed and well rested. It's a good idea to start sitting down or over a soft surface like a bed. Having someone else to assist you work it out can be a great help as well. You may like to practice with a doll or teddy bear to get used to the way your Mbeleko feels.

Here are some simple instructions to help you get started, please consult our website www.mbeleko.com.au for further instructions and carrying positions.



Two week old Bryn in Snuggle hold