Kindness, consideration for others, love and cleanliness create an atmosphere of peace and serenity in the home. A baby absorbs this from his or her parents and will thrive in this environment. Here is what you need to know about bringing your baby home, including how to create a safe sleep environment, introduce your newborn to siblings, and safely travel with your baby in a car and an airplane.
The Newborn’s Room

A newborn needs a warmer room than an older baby. For the first few weeks, the temperature of the room should be kept around 68 to 72 degrees, both during the day and at night. For older babies, the daytime temperature may be kept between 65 and 70 degrees. In California, the temperature of the baby’s room is rarely a problem.

The baby’s room also needs fresh air, but be careful of drafts. Indirect ventilation, achieved by keeping the door and windows open in an adjacent room, is often best for the first few weeks of life or if the baby has cold symptoms.

An open gas heater should never be used in a baby’s room. Electric heat or a ventilated gas heater is better. If an open gas heater is all that is available, direct ventilation is advised by opening at least one window in the room.

Dealing with Older Siblings

Children over 6 years old should join the adults in welcoming their newborn brother or sister, and should be allowed to help care for the baby. If they want to hold and cuddle their new sibling, you can seat them in the middle of your bed and allow them to safely hold the baby under supervision. Younger children, especially those under 3 years old, are too immature to share much “pride of ownership” in the new baby since they are really only babies themselves. They naturally tend to feel a little jealous when a tiny (but popular) stranger takes over as the center of attention. Be sure these brothers and sisters are not left out, and introduce them as the “big brother” or “big sister” to family and friends.
Safe Sleep

The American Academy of Pediatrics updated its safe sleep recommendations in 2016 to protect infants against sleep-related deaths, including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The following is what you need to know:

1. Babies should be put to sleep on their backs for the first year of life. As your baby gets older, she may roll from her back to her stomach, which is OK.

2. It is recommended that all infants sleep in the same room as their parents until they are at least 6 months old, and preferably 1 year old.

3. Avoid these items in the crib
   - Blankets
   - Bumpers
   - Pillows
   - Stuffed toys

4. Babies should always sleep on a firm mattress that fits snugly in the crib, covered with a fitted sheet.

5. The crib or bassinet should meet current safety standards. There should never be any loose or soft objects in it.

6. Using a pacifier at nap and bedtime helps reduce the risk of sleep-related death, including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

7. Your infants can be brought into your bed for feeding or comfort, but should be returned to their own crib or bassinet before you go to sleep.

8. Do not put your baby down to nap or sleep in:
   - Couch or armchair
   - A stroller
   - A reclining sleeper
   - A car seat
   - A sibling’s bed
   - An infant swing

THE NEWBORN MANUAL

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Traveling With Your Newborn

When going out with your newborn, try to avoid crowds for the first month and plan outings between feedings. Always have a bottle with breast milk or formula and extra diapers with you in case you are delayed.

Child Safety on Airplanes

Air travel is generally ok if your baby is in good health starting around 1 month of age. Be sure to talk to your doctor prior to any international travel.

To help relieve pressure in the ears during takeoff and landing, have your infant either nurse or take a bottle.

The safest place for an infant if there is turbulence or an emergency is in a child restraint system (CRS).

A CRS is a hard-backed child safety seat approved for use in both motor vehicles and airplanes. The CRS must be government approved and have the following message on it or you may be asked to check it as baggage: “This restraint is certified for use in motor vehicles and aircraft.” The CRS should be no wider than 16 inches. It must be placed in a window seat and cannot be placed in an emergency row.
**Child Safety in the Car**

**Your child must always ride**
in a car seat when in the car.
The following are details about
the types of car seats that are safe for
newborns and infants.
- All infants and toddlers should ride
  in a rear-facing car safety seat until
  they are 2 years old.
- Infant only car seats are small and
  have carrying handles. They may
  come with a base that can be left in
  the car.
- Convertible car seats can also be
  placed in a rear-facing position, but
  they have higher height and weight
  limits (up to 30 to 40 pounds), which
  make them ideal for bigger babies.
  Convertible seats usually have a
  five-point harness that attaches
  at the shoulders, at the hips, and
  between the legs.
- 3-in-1 car seats can be used rear-fac-
  ing, forward-facing, or as a belt-
  positioning booster. These seats are
  bigger in size, so adequate space in
  the vehicle is required. They may
  have higher rear-facing height and
  weight limits (35 to 40 pounds) than
  infant-only seats, which make them
  ideal for bigger babies.

**Common Car Seat Concerns**

**Baby slouches down or to the side in his car seat**: You can
place blanket rolls on both sides of your baby and place a diaper
or small blanket between him and the car seat’s crotch strap.
Do not place padding under or behind him or use a car seat
insert unless it came with the seat or was made by the seat’s
manufacturer.

**Child’s feet touch the seat when in a rear-facing position**: Don’t worry if your
child’s feet touch the vehicle seat. He can easily bend his legs
and keep comfortable. Also, it is
rare for there to be leg injuries
in the event of an accident.

**Installation Tips for Rear-Facing Seats**

1. Place the harness in your rear-
   facing seat in the slots that are at or
   below your baby’s shoulders.

2. Ensure that the harness is snug and
   that the harness clip is positioned at the
   mid-chest level.

3. Make sure the car safety seat is
   installed tightly in the vehicle. If you can
   move the seat at the belt path more than
   an inch side-to-side or front-to-back, it’s
   not tight enough.

4. Make sure that the seat is at the
   correct angle so your infant’s head
   does not flop forward. Many seats have
   angle indicators or adjusters that can
   help prevent this.