

Infant Safe Sleep Tips for Grandparents

As grandparents, you play an important role in your grandchildren's lives. Whether you're helping out during a busy day, a weekend getaway, or an extended stay, it's important to stay informed about the latest safe sleep practices.

Some safe sleep recommendations have changed over time as new research has emerged. Since the late 1980s, infant sleep-related deaths have decreased significantly, and this is largely due to new, safer sleep environments and practices for babies as well as improved regulations that make products safer.

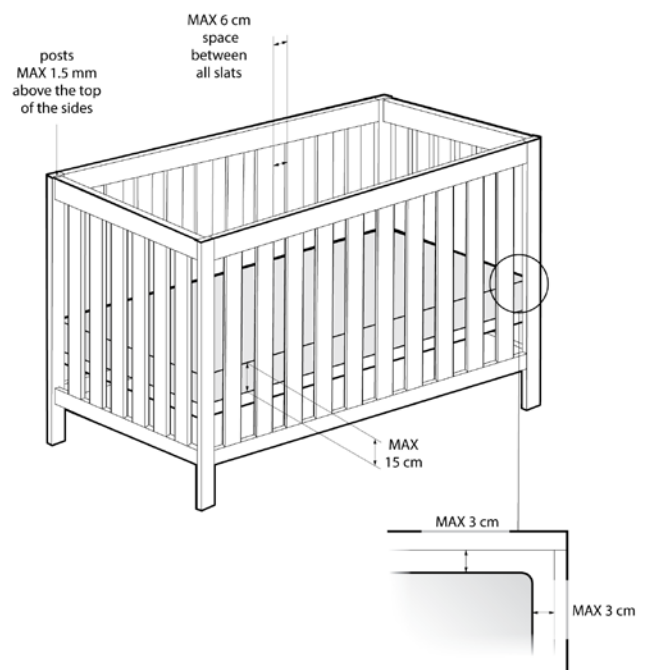


Safe sleep tips for your grandbabies

Babies are safest when they sleep in a crib, cradle, or bassinet that meets Canadian safety regulations.

Maybe you have been saving your children's crib for years hoping to be able to use it again or pass it down, but older cribs can pose serious risks.

- Cribs made before September 1986 should not be used. For example, they don't meet current safety regulations for slat spacing. Babies can get their head trapped between slats that are spaced too far apart.
- As of December 29, 2016, it's illegal to sell, import, manufacture or advertise traditional drop-side cribs in Canada. Drop-side cribs are not safe and have been linked to injuries and death.
- Cribs, cradles and bassinets that are more than 10 years old should be checked for missing, loose, worn, broken or damaged parts.



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Some families opt to use a playpen when baby is sleeping away from home. In Canada, playpens aren't recommended for unsupervised sleep because they don't offer the same durability and safety as cribs. If you choose to use a playpen temporarily while your grandbaby visits, there are steps you can take to make their sleep safer.

To learn more:

- [Playpen safety](#)
- [Safe sleep on the go](#)
- [Cribs, cradles and bassinets](#)

Babies are safest when they sleep alone on their backs, for every sleep.

Time spent with your grandbabies is precious, and it might be tempting to snuggle up with your grandbaby on a bed, chair, or couch, but these aren't safe places for them to sleep.

Sleeping on furniture designed for adults or older children increases your grandbaby's risk of suffocation, entrapment and falls. These can happen quickly and quietly.

Years ago, placing babies on their stomachs to sleep was common practice. That changed in 1999 with the launch of the Back to Sleep campaign, which recommended putting babies to sleep on their backs. Studies have shown that stomach and side sleeping are linked to increased rates of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). As a result of the campaign, deaths from SIDS decreased by 50% in the following years.



Even babies who spit up a lot are safest sleeping on their backs.

Babies are safest on a firm, flat surface.

When your grandbaby visits, they may fall asleep in products that are designed for play rather than for sleep. If this happens, it's important to move them to a firm, flat surface to ensure their safety.

Sleeping in a stroller, sling, carrier, car seat, or any inclined product can place a baby in positions that make breathing difficult. Even short naps in these items can pose serious risks.

Babies are safest in a sleep space free of soft items.

Babies, especially those under 4 months, have poor neck control, making them more vulnerable to suffocation.

To keep your grandbaby safe, keep their sleep space completely free of loose or soft items. This means no blankets, quilts, pillows, bumper pads, mattress toppers, sleep positioners, or soft toys in their sleep space. Each of these can pose a suffocation risk.

Soft products like baby nests, loungers, nursing pillows and cushions are not safe places for your grandbaby to sleep. The soft, padded sides pose a suffocation risk.

Even draping a blanket over a crib, cradle or bassinet to block out light can be dangerous. It can cause overheating, reduce airflow and if it falls, put your grandbaby at risk of suffocation.

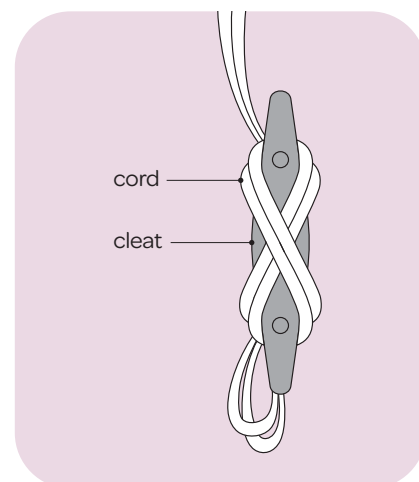


Babies are safest when there are no cords, windows or other furniture near their sleep space.

Never place your grandbaby's crib, cradle, bassinet or playpen near a window or other furniture. Your grandbaby could use the furniture to climb out of their crib or up to the window and get caught in the window covering or fall through a window screen.

Always keep cords out of reach of children. Window covering regulations have changed over time to address strangulation deaths and near-fatal incidents. The safest window coverings are those without long, accessible cords. Loose cords, including those on older window coverings, can strangle your grandbaby.

If you cannot replace older window coverings, install a cleat or tie-down device high on the wall to keep the cords out of reach.



Learn more: [Window covering safety](#)

Babies are safest when they don't overheat.

Keep your grandbaby warm, but not hot. Babies are usually comfortable in a light sleeper.

They are also safest when they sleep in simple, fitted sleepwear like a sleeper. They do not need a hat indoors. This can make them too hot. It is also not safe for your grandbaby to sleep in their outerwear. Remember to remove their snowsuit or jacket once indoors.

Babies do not need blankets when they sleep. Many families choose to use a sleep sack when baby needs an extra layer.



Babies are safest in a smoke-free environment.

It's important to be smoke-free to help reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Second-hand smoke increases the risk of SIDS after your grandbaby is born. Do not let anyone smoke around your grandbaby—in the house, in the car or anywhere they spend time.

- Before using or buying a product for your grandbaby make sure it hasn't been recalled.
- Visit Canada.ca/recalls

Learn more:

Canada.ca/safesleep