

# Nipple shields



## Lactation- parent information

Nipple shields are thin silicone covers placed over the nipple and areola to assist with breastfeeding. These are only temporary tools, so it is important to talk to a lactation consultant, midwife, or child and family health nurse before using them. They can ensure you're using the right size shield and that your baby is latching well and getting enough milk.

### When to use

There are many different reasons you might need a nipple shield. Here are a few:

- Your baby was born early (premature)
- You have inverted or 'flat' nipples
- Your nipples are sore or damaged
- Your baby has mouth variations (like a high palate or tongue-tie)
- You are trying to help your baby transition to breastfeeding

Sometimes, using a better position and helping the baby attach well can solve the problem without needing a nipple shield.

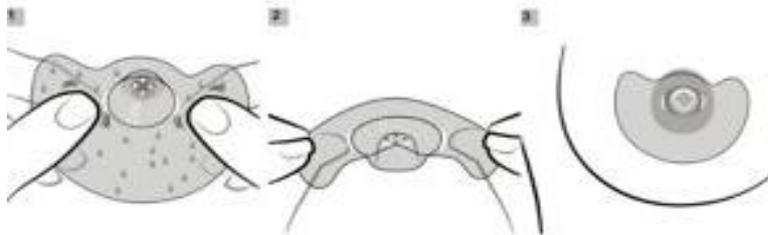
### Impacts of use

It is not recommended to use a shield in the first few days before your milk has 'come in.' During the first 3-5 days, your milk will change from colostrum to mature milk. If the baby can't latch on and you have colostrum, you may need to hand-express to feed them.

Nipple shields come in various sizes. The right fit is important to avoid damage to your nipples while breastfeeding. Using Nipple shields can make it harder to feel the baby sucking at the breast, which *may* reduce your milk supply over time.

### How to use

To apply the nipple shield, invert the shield slightly and hand express a small amount of breastmilk into the cone. Place the shield centrally over your nipple and roll the edges over your breast. If the shield has a cut-out part, position it so that the baby's nose will touch the breast.



**Please note:** Bottle-shaped nipple shields are not recommended, as they haven't been shown to help. For better results, use a standard nipple shield.

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## Breastfeeding & Attachment

1. Place your fingertips on the outer edge of the shield. Touch your baby's lips with the shield and wait for them to open their mouth wide.
2. Bring baby to the breast. Move your fingers away so they can attach well.
3. Make sure the baby's chin is pressed against your breast, and their mouth is open wide around the shield. Their bottom lip should be turned out, not just on the tip of the shield.
4. Once well attached, your baby will begin to suck and swallow. You may hear the swallows as a soft ticking sound or 'cooh.'
5. At the end of the breastfeed, your nipple should feel normal with no pain. If this hurts, the baby might not be latching on properly, or the shield might not be the correct size.
6. If there is milk in the shield, your breastmilk was coming through the shield.
7. Ensure your breasts feel well drained after the breastfeed.

**Well Attached**



**Poorly Attached**



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## Care of the Nipple Shield

After each use, wash your nipple shield with hot soapy water. Rinse it well and let it air dry. You can store it in a clean, dry airtight container until its next use. Discard if the shield looks damaged in any way.

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## Weaning

It is recommended that the nipple shield be weaned when the infant is ready. This can take time, and you might need support from a healthcare professional, child and family health nurse, or lactation consultant.

- Attempt to wean when both you and baby are feeling calm and relaxed.
- Start breastfeeding with the nipple shield and then remove the shield halfway through the feed when the nipple is drawn out, to help with reattaching your baby.

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## For more information and advice

- Your midwife, nurse, child and family health nurse or lactation consultant
- Australian Breastfeeding Association [www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au) or helpline 1800 686 268
- Raising Children Network [www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)
- Growing Healthy Kids Website <https://www.growinghealthykids.com.au/>
- Global Health Media Videos [www.globalhealthmedia.org](http://www.globalhealthmedia.org)

This information is for guidance only and does not replace advice from your healthcare provider.