

# 7 Tips for Breastfeeding in Public

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Not too long ago, I took my oldest daughter to story time at the library. While she ventured off to the other room for an exciting hour of music and stories, her younger sister and I played outside in the common area room. My two-year-old struck up a friendship with another girl her age, until they had a little misunderstanding over one of the plastic toys.

Distraught, the little girl toddled over to her mother, who, still sitting in her chair and scrolling furiously on her phone, simply hoisted up her shirt while the little girl stood and nursed.

I have to admit that even though I have nursed all my children—am still nursing my youngest at 11 months, in fact – I have never quite mastered the art of nursing in public. I'm an OB nurse and a supporter of breastfeeding, but I can admit to you that I've never felt totally comfortable in public. And yet, sometimes, it's just gotta be done, so I've rounded up some of my favorite tips for breastfeeding in public.



Image via Flickr/[ilovememphis](#)

**Use a good cover-up.** I'm going to sound really silly for admitting this, but with all of my reservations about nursing in public, I've never actually used a cover-up specifically for breastfeeding. I've always just used a blanket and hoped the baby wouldn't kick it off. Which, let's face it, *always* happens. You want to look for one with an open top, so that you can see the baby well enough to get her latched on while still keeping covered, like [Udder Covers](#).



Image via Flickr/[ilkerender](#)

**Ask for a corner booth.** My best experiences with public breastfeeding have been in restaurants, especially when my babies were newborns. I would simply ask for a corner booth, where I could feel comfortably shielded from other restaurant patrons and feel like the baby and I were “hidden” enough for me to actually enjoy my meal.



Image via [Chaunie Brusie](#)

**Nurse in the car.** I can't tell you how many times I have excused myself from a social situation and headed out to our car for a quick feeding session. I keep my keys stashed easily in the side pocket of the diaper bag and can feel free to kick back and heck, even take a nap while the baby gets his fill.



Image via Flickr/[roger\\_mommaerts](#)

**Think of it as extra cuddle time.** With my first daughter, I resented breastfeeding at social functions—I hated that I spent the majority of any party, wedding, or even meal feeding the baby. By the time my second and third child rolled around though, I started to see that time spent nursing them for what it was—extra alone and cuddle time.



Image via Flickr/[Parker Knight](#)

**Always, always wear a long tank top.** Being a breastfeeding mama makes clothes shopping extra difficult sometimes; your first thought isn't "Wow, I wonder if this will look cute on me?" but, "Hmmm, I wonder if I can nurse in this?" My best solution to this has to always wear a longer tank-top or undershirt; that way if I can't pull my shirt down from the top, I don't have to worry about baring my entire stomach and breast when I pull the shirt *up*.



Image via Flickr/[...love Maegan](#)

**You don't necessarily need a nursing bra.** Aside from the first few weeks with my first child, I have never used a nursing bra. I found that they actually made breastfeeding in public more difficult with all the fiddling and latches and what-not. Instead, I bought a couple of stretchy, cheap bras and simply pull them down at the cup or lift the bra over my breast to feed the baby. It's way faster and I think regular bras provide a bit more support than the nursing bras, which tended to get stretched out quickly in my experience.



Image via Flickr/[Kheel Center, Cornell University](#)

**Go with your comfort level.** I am anticipating that this post might make some mothers angry —*there's no reason to be discreet, they'll say. Breastfeeding is natural!* It is, and I agree. However, I have just never felt comfortable without some degree of privacy when nursing my baby. My babies have hated being covered and tend to break their latch at the most

inopportune moments ever, spraying milk everywhere. Point of the story? Do what feels comfortable to you. If that means openly breastfeeding in public, then do it. And if that means wanting a little more privacy, then by all means, do it!

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Chaunie Brusie is a coffee mug addict, a labor and delivery nurse turned freelance writer, and a young(ish) mom of four. She is the author of "Tiny Blue Lines: Preparing For Your Baby, Moving Forward In Faith, & Reclaiming Your Life In An Unplanned Pregnancy" and "The Moments That Made You A Mother". She also runs Passion Meets Practicality, a community of tips + inspiration for work-at-home mothers. ... [More](#)