

# How To Buy a Good Bra

One of the best things you can do for your breasts during pregnancy is invest in a supportive bra that fits you properly. Often, women wear ill-fitting bras that are either too tight or the wrong cup size. A well-fitting bra will do wonders for achy, tender breasts. There's no guarantee, though, that a good bra can prevent stretch marks; whether you get them depends more on your skin type and on the speed at which you gain weight.

The bra should offer support both on the sides and under the breasts; usually a second panel of material in the bottom half of the cup will do the trick. You may be used to wearing a bra with underwire for extra support. Around the fifth month of pregnancy, you'll probably have to switch to a soft-cup bra, because underwire becomes uncomfortable for many women as their breasts grow.

Cotton is the best fabric choice, because it allows air to circulate around your skin. This is especially important if your breasts leak; nipples that are constantly wet are prone to irritation. Wide straps will prevent the fabric from cutting into your shoulders under the weight of growing breasts.

If you plan to breastfeed, you'll need to buy a nursing bra, which has flaps that open to make it easy for you to allow the baby access to your breasts. For the best fit, shop as late in pregnancy as possible, and allow room for a little growth both in cup size and around the rib cage. Buy only one or two bras now, in case your size changes. Underwire is a definite no-no, as it can contribute to plugged ducts and in some cases even interfere with the flow of milk.

As any nursing mother with a hungry infant can tell you, it's a good idea to look for a bra with fasteners that allow you to easily open and close the flaps with one hand.

There are also bras available that are designed to work with a patented pumping free attachment kit, which allows mothers to pump with hands-free convenience. Sports-type nursing bras are also available. Extended sizes range from 36-46 F, G, H, which feature extra wide adjustable straps, soft shoulder pads and a lower panel in the cup containing a special soft lift foundation designed to provide excellent support without binding or pinching. Special order bras are an option as well. Nursing bras are available at maternity shops or through catalogs. Ask your breastfeeding educator for more information.

## DETERMINING BRA SIZE

BUST MEASUREMENT - UNDERARM MEASUREMENT	CUP SIZE
Up to 1 Inch	A
Up to 2 Inches	B
Up to 3 Inches	C
Up to 4 Inches	D
Up to 5 Inches	DD
Up to 6 Inches	F
Up to 7 Inches	G
Up to 8 Inches	H

### Example:

39"	Underarm Measurement
+1	Add 1" if measurement is an uneven number
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40"	Band Size
43"	Bust Measurement
43"	Bust Measurement
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-40"	Subtract Band Size
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3"	Cup Size C

Size 40 C