



Bond, baby, bond

Bonding with a newborn baby is a magical process. But for many mums it doesn't happen overnight in a big woosh. Here are some ways of helping the natural process along.

Before you meet: bonding with your bump

Your 20-week scan is an amazing experience and, for the first time, you will see your baby in amazing detail: waving, sucking his thumb and moving around. Drink lots of water beforehand, it will make the scan show up better.

Massage your bump

Use olive oil, and soft but confident strokes on your bump, and chat away. Stop if your baby kicks, then start up again when the kicks stop.

Keep a pregnancy journal...

You might feel a little crazy writing diary entries to your baby before it's born, but in fact, the process will really help you communicate with your baby, and is a wonderful record of your pregnancy. You might even want to show her what you've written when she is grown up enough to understand. Take a look at Fairy's 'Fairygodmother' video diaries for inspiration at www.babyworld.co.uk/fairygodmothers

Once your babe is born

Simply spend as much time as possible not doing anything at all together. Looking into each others eyes, letting the baby feel your skin and listening to the little squeaks and grunts will help you get to know your baby quicker.

Make your world, and theirs, softer

Wash baby clothes and bedding in gentle Fairy Non-Bio and Fairy Fabric Softener, and yours too. There's no softer non-bio and it's available in liquid, liquidab, powder and tablet form. It's ideal for sensitive skins and makes clothes feel as comfortable as a second skin.

All singing all dancing

Dancing with your baby held close is a brilliant bonding trick.

Relax outside together

Lie down next to your baby and feel the tickly grass together, or the soft rug, or watch a ladybird climb a blade of grass. Suddenly you'll see things from your baby's level.

Learn the art of baby conversation

Learning to chat with your baby will strengthen your bond. Say something in a sing-song voice, then wait for your babe to 'answer' – she might make a face, move her lips or jiggle

her limbs. When she stops, it's your cue to start talking again. Make a little 'O' with your mouth and watch them try and copy you, even newborns will try.

And at the end of the day...

Have a bath together – babies love skin to skin contact. And while they're feeding, sing gently or just admire them back.

Read all about it

My bump and me (Virgin, £14.99) by Myleene Klass – a journal of Myleene's pregnancy.

Bonding with your bump (Dorling Kindersley, £9.99) by Miriam Stoppard. Get closer to your growing baby.

The Yummy Mummy's Survival Guide (Harper, £8.99) by Liz Fraser. Puts the mmmm back into motherhood