

BIRTHING NATURALLY

What Position is My Baby?

Knowing where your baby is inside your body can help you visualize how he will come out, and can alert you to changes you may want to make as your pregnancy progresses. Midwives use a series of abdominal touches to distinguish the parts of your baby. With a little practice, you can identify your baby's parts as well. It may be easier to have a loved one do this with you. Remember, your baby is mobile, even if you determine his position today, he may twist and turn before tomorrow.

Step One: What is the Presenting Part?

The presenting part is the part of your baby that is settled into the pelvis. In about 90% of cases this is your baby's head. Place a hand on the fundus (top of your uterus) to steady your movements and with the other hand grasp the uterus near the pelvis between your thumb and forefinger. Your baby's head will be hard, smooth and easy to move. Your baby's buttocks will be softer and will tend to move the whole body when wiggled. If your baby's head is engaged in the pelvis it will be harder to move from side to side.

Step Two: Where is the Back?

With hands on either side of the uterus, use one hand to steady the uterus while the other feels for the baby. The side with your baby's back will be firmer and smoother with even resistance to the pressure of the touch. On the side without the back you will be able to press much deeper and may feel limbs moving.

Step Three: What is the Fundus?

After finding your baby's back, slide your hands up the sides of your uterus to the top (near your chest). This area is called the fundus and will probably contain your baby's buttocks. Wiggling the buttocks should make the whole body move. Moving parts in this area are probably legs and feet. If you find a hard, smooth part that moves without the rest of the body your baby may be in a breech position.

Step Four: Where is the Back of the Baby's Head?

Slide your fingers back down to the bottom of the uterus and feel for the head from both sides. The largest part of the head will give you more resistance to your fingers pressing in on the uterus. If the biggest part is on the same side as your baby's back, his head is extended and you are feeling the back of the head. If the biggest part is on the opposite side as the back it is flexed and you are feeling the forehead.

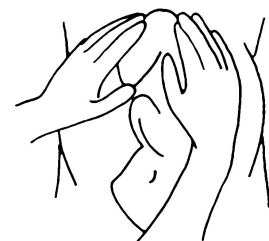
DIAGRAMS



Step One: What is the Presenting Part?



Step Two: Where is the Back?



Step Three: Where is the Fundus?



Step Four: Where is the Back of the Baby's Head?