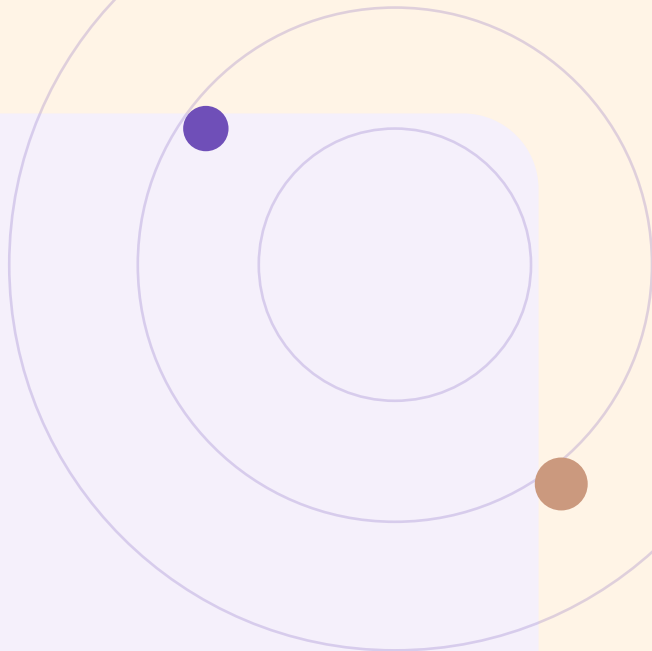




A WOBBLE FIELD GUIDE

The Purposeful Baby Tracking Field Guide

What to track, why it helps and when to stop.

6 SHORT CHAPTERS

READ ONLINE AT [WOBBLELABS.UK/FIELD-GUIDE](https://wobblelabs.uk/field-guide)

wobble

Start With the Question You Have

01

Do You Need to Track Your Baby?

Probably not by default. A log becomes useful when you can name the job it needs to do.

02

What Baby Trackers Genuinely Help With

The strongest everyday use is not prediction. It is remembering, handing over and looking back at one clear question.

03

Start With a Question

Don't log just because everyone else does. Ask yourself why you need to log.

04

How long should you track?

There is no universal day count. Track till the log has answered its question or stopped changing a useful decision.

05

When Tracking Starts Adding Pressure

The same log can reassure one parent and become another job for someone else. Notice the cost as well as the benefit.

06

What Parenting and Health Authorities Actually Say

Guidance tends to support observation or logging for a specific reason, not the most complete possible archive.

THE WHOLE GUIDE IN 3 MOVES

Name the question / Track the minimum / Review whether it still helps

Do You Need to Track Your Baby?

Probably not by default. A log becomes useful when you can name the job it needs to do.

THE SHORT ANSWER

If you can follow your baby's cues, remember the details that matter and hand care over without a log, you may not need one.

1

Begin With the Real Question

Early baby care contains a lot of small details. When did the last feed start? Which side did we use? What happened while somebody else was looking after the baby? A log can take those details out of your head.

That does not mean every detail needs a permanent place in an app. The simplest test is whether the log has a job.

TRY THIS SENTENCE

I am tracking ____ because I want to understand ____.

2

3 Reasons a Log May Help

A useful log usually supports a specific decision, a handover between caregivers or a plan requested by a healthcare professional.

- You have one question you cannot answer from memory.
- Care passes between people and a recent fact needs to travel with it.
- A midwife, health visitor, GP or paediatrician has asked for specific information.

3

Not Tracking Is Fine

No broad authority reviewed for Wobble tells every parent of a healthy baby to install an app or maintain a complete daily archive. Feeding guidance commonly points parents back to hunger, break and fullness cues.

If the second half of the sentence above is hard to fill, you may not need to track yet. You can begin later if a real question appears.

What Baby Trackers Genuinely Help With

The strongest everyday use is not prediction. It is remembering, handing over and looking back at one clear question.

THE SHORT ANSWER

A tracker can remember the small details, keep caregivers in step and organise a short log to look back on or discuss with a healthcare professional. It cannot diagnose a problem or know what your baby needs next.

1

Memory, Without the Mental Arithmetic

When nobody can remember which side the last feed started on or whether the medicine was already given, a recent entry can be valuable. Often the useful fact is the last one, not a grand trend.

A small 2025 interview study of 20 US parents described baby-tracking logs supporting memory, caregiver handover, daily totals and reflection. It describes how those parents used tracking; it does not show that an app improves health outcomes.

2

A Clearer Handover

A short recent log can help when care moves between partners, grandparents, nursery staff or anyone else helping that day. The useful question may be as small as 'When did she last feed?'

A complete history of every ordinary event may add nothing to that handover. The log should match the decision it serves.

3

Looking Back, Not Predicting

Looking back can reveal that a pattern is worth discussing or simply make a difficult week easier to describe. But babies change, and yesterday's chart cannot promise tomorrow's nap or next feed.

The evidence base is limited and mostly qualitative or cross-sectional. There is no strong causal evidence here that routine tracking improves sleep, feeding, growth or health for healthy babies.

USEFUL BOUNDARY

A tracker can show what you logged. It cannot see, examine or diagnose your baby.

Start With a Question

Don't log just because everyone else does. Ask yourself why you need to log.

THE SHORT ANSWER

Write a specific question about your baby that you want to answer. This turns logging into a small experiment instead of an endless task.

1

Make the Question Specific

'I want to understand sleep' is broad enough to keep a family logging forever. 'What time has the first nap started over the last 5 days?' has a clear end. It tells you what to log and when to look back.

2

Questions With a Clear Finish

Here are a few examples of questions that can be answered with a short log.

- Handover: What does the next caregiver need to know from the last few hours?
- Memory: Which side did the last breastfeed begin on?
- Looking back: Has bedtime shifted noticeably this week?
- Appointment: What specific recent information did the clinician ask us to bring?

3

Know What Would Count as an Answer

Before you start, decide what would make you feel the question is answered. It might be noticing whether the first nap starts around the same time for a few days, or having enough recent information for a handover.

You do not need perfect data. You need enough to look back and say, 'I know what I wanted to know.'

BEFORE YOU LOG

What would make me feel this question is answered?

How long should you track?

There is no universal day count. Track till the log has answered its question or stopped changing a useful decision.

THE SHORT ANSWER

Return to the reason you started. If the log no longer changes a decision, supports a handover or serves a clinical plan, consider reducing, changing or stopping it.

1

You don't need to maintain a streak

Most trackers make it easy to keep going without thinking about why: log today, then return tomorrow. A log with a clear reason includes a point to look back and decide.

Ask whether the original question is answered, whether anybody still uses the information and whether the log still feels worth the effort.

2

4 Ways Forward

Stopping is not the only successful ending. The useful choice depends on the job the log is doing.

- Continue: the log still has a clear job, so choose another review point.
- Reduce: keep only the category or detail that still helps.
- Change: rewrite the question and start a new, focused log.
- Stop: the question is answered or the log no longer helps.

3

Know the Exception

A review prompt is not a medical end date. Premature, unwell and medically complex babies may need detailed, clinician-directed logs. A shared medicine log may also remain useful for as long as doses need coordinating.

Clinical guidance always takes priority. The app should return the decision to the parent without pretending to know the right answer for every family.

REVIEW QUESTION

Is this log still helping with what we started it for?

01

A question

What do I want to understand?

Continue

02

A short log

Keep only what helps answer it.

Change

03

An answer

Review what you learned.

Stop

When Tracking Starts Adding Pressure

The same log can reassure one parent and become another job for someone else. Notice the cost as well as the benefit.

THE SHORT ANSWER

Tracking may hurt more than it helps when missing an entry feels like failure, the clock overrides the baby in front of you, or logging continues without a question. None of those signs means you have done anything wrong.

1

A Mixed Experience Is Normal

In a small interview study, breastfeeding mothers described both greater control and confidence and concerns about over-reliance, overload and credibility. A survey of 234 German mothers found similar overall wellbeing across use styles, while lower breastfeeding self-efficacy was associated with the most intensive tracking.

That survey cannot tell us which came first. Lower confidence may lead to more tracking; intensive tracking may affect confidence; both may be shaped by something else.

2

Signs to Pause and Review

Treat these as prompts, not a diagnosis.

- You log from habit but cannot answer if logging helps.
- A missed entry makes the day feel wrong or incomplete.
- You trust the timer more than the hunger, fullness or tiredness cues you can see.
- Entering data interrupts the care or rest it was meant to support.

3

Make Less a Normal Choice

Do not punish an empty day, celebrate a logging streak or imply that completeness is good parenting. A calmer tool should make continuing, tracking less and stopping feel like normal choices.

One clinical protocol recommends discouraging feeding and sleep trackers for breastfeeding families in a defined nighttime-care context. The recommendation is strength C and should not be stretched into a rule for every family.

WOBBLE'S VIEW

Logging should answer a question, and help you understand your baby's routine. It should not be a chore that stresses you.

What Parenting and Health Authorities Actually Say

Guidance tends to support observation or logging for a specific reason, not the most complete possible archive.

THE SHORT ANSWER

Authorities do not offer one verdict on baby-tracking apps. They support responsive feeding, clinically interpreted growth records, accurate medicine information and safer sleep practice. A tracker must stay inside those boundaries.

1

Feeding: Watch the Baby, Not Only the Clock

NHS responsive-feeding guidance centres hunger, break and fullness cues. A log can help you remember recent events or describe wet and dirty nappies, but it should not automatically overrule the baby in front of you.

2

Growth and Medicine: Records With Clear Boundaries

Growth records matter when interpreted in context, yet the NHS limits routine weighing frequency unless there is a concern or professional instruction. More measurements are not automatically better.

For medicines, accurate written information can support coordination. The label, pharmacist or prescriber remains the source of truth; an app must not invent or recalculate a dose.

3

Sleep: A Log Is Not a Safety Measure

The Lullaby Trust says monitors do not prevent SIDS or replace supervision and safer sleep practice. A manual sleep log is a different tool, but it should never be presented as making sleep safe.

The honest conclusion is modest: tracking is optional for many families, useful in some defined situations and capable of creating burden as well as reassurance.

KEEP THE BOUNDARY VISIBLE

Observe and remember with an app. Diagnose, prescribe and set clinical plans with qualified professionals.

Read the Evidence, Keep the Limits

- 01 Understanding Temporality of Reflection in Personal Informatics through Baby Tracking
ACM CHI
[Open the original source](#)
- 02 An investigation into the use of infant feeding tracker apps by breastfeeding mothers
Health Informatics Journal
[Open the original source](#)
- 03 Digital Motherhood: Self-Tracking Apps for Breastfeeding Mothers
European Journal of Health Communication
[Open the original source](#)
- 04 Feeding on demand
NHS Best Start in Life
[Open the original source](#)
- 05 How Often and How Much Should Your Baby Eat?
American Academy of Pediatrics
[Open the original source](#)
- 06 Your baby's weight and height
NHS
[Open the original source](#)
- 07 Medicines for babies and children
NHS
[Open the original source](#)
- 08 Neonatal Discharge Planning Guideline
Thames Valley and Wessex Neonatal ODN
[Open the original source](#)
- 09 Clinical Protocol 37: Physiological Infant Care, Managing Nighttime Breastfeeding
Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine
[Open the original source](#)
- 10 Baby monitors
The Lullaby Trust
[Open the original source](#)
- 11 How to Keep Your Sleeping Baby Safe: AAP Policy Explained
American Academy of Pediatrics
[Open the original source](#)

The point is not that parents should stop tracking. It is that tracking should have a clear purpose and an end.

You do not need to track everything. Start with one question, log only what helps answer it, and review whether the log is still useful. A clinician-led plan always takes priority.

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