

EarBuddies™ Fitting Guide

Before you start

Read the pages under the 'How it Works' menu on the website - this is full of useful information about Early Ear Correction™ and will give you a good base knowledge on splintage. For further information, the FAQs page provides the answers to some interesting questions raised by parents who have previously fitted EarBuddies. This Guide is for Stick-Out Ears ONLY. For other ear conditions & additional content, see the [Online Fitting Guide](#).

Take your Time

We understand that having a new baby in the house is stressful, so take your time to read through the instructions fully, at least once, before you begin.

Maintain hygiene

We stress the importance of proper hygiene throughout the duration of the splintage process. Before you fit the splints, and every time you change the tapes, it is of paramount importance to thoroughly wash your hands with soap. Improper hygiene may result in infection.

When to fit

Parents report that it is easier to fit when baby is sleeping or feeding, and that fitting earlier in the day is preferable.

Don't Rush

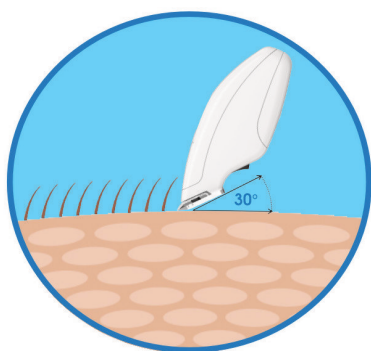
Don't rush - fitting may take longer than you think on your first attempt. We know that fitting EarBuddies splints can be a little fiddly at first, but your persistence should pay off, and one day your child will be very grateful.

You will need:

- Your EarBuddies Premium Pack or Basic Kit.
- Some toys and books as a distraction (if baby is awake), and a helper if available.
- A pair of child-friendly safety scissors.
- A little dexterity and some patience, particularly if your baby is more than 2 weeks old, when they begin to be more active.

Step 1 - Shave a little hair

- Shave the hair, no matter how fine, in the area where the tapes will stick for a firm, comfortable and trouble-free fix. This is especially important for babies older than one month, who have more hair than newborns.



- Shaving a little hair around the ears will do your baby no harm. Remember: hair grows back quickly, but prominent or deformed ears are permanent if not corrected.
- If you have bought the Premium Pack, you can keep a few of your baby's first locks of hair in the keepsake envelope provided. Babies have delicate skin, so be gentle, and shave at a 30° angle.
- See the photo above for guidance on how much hair to shave.



Step 2 - Bathing

Give baby a bath with particular focus on degreasing the ears. Using gentle baby soap, roll the ears between your fingers to ensure they are thoroughly clean, paying particular attention to the folds and creases. Let baby play in the bath to give the soap time to work, then gently rub the ears again with your fingers. Rinse off and dry the ears, rubbing gently with a clean soft towel. Let your baby's ears dry for AT LEAST 90 minutes before fitting the splints.



We would recommend taking photos at this stage to record the progress.

Step 3 - Cavilon™ No Sting Barrier Film (optional)

Cavilon is used to prevent skin inflammation beneath the EarBuddies splint, behind the ear and beneath the adhesive tapes. The adhesive tapes can be applied on top of this film, once it has dried. If you would like further information about Cavilon, see our online product page.

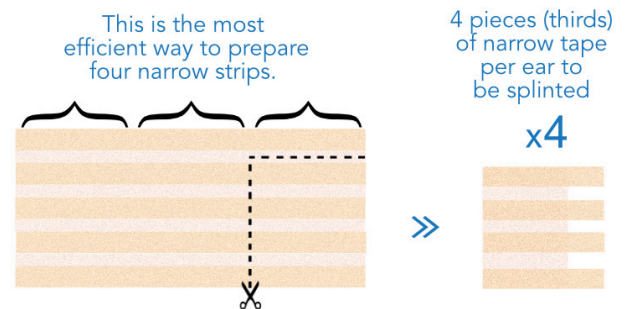
If your baby's skin is sensitive, you live in a humid country, your baby is older than 1 month or you have difficulty keeping the tapes dry, then Cavilon is strongly recommended. If this is your first fitting, and you aren't aware that your baby's skin is particularly sensitive, we would still recommend applying Cavilon before you begin, as a moisture barrier. If your baby is under 1 month of age, the need for Cavilon is less.



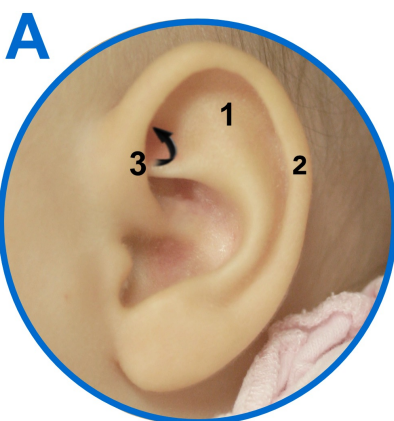
- Skin should be clean and dry prior to application of Cavilon.
 - Hold spray nozzle 10-15 centimetres from skin and apply a smooth, uniform coating of film over the entire area behind the ear and the areas that will be in contact with the splints and adhesive tapes.
 - If an area is missed, reapply to that area only after the first application of Cavilon has dried (approximately 30 seconds).
 - Where there is skin-to-skin contact, such as the crease behind the ear, make sure that these skin-to-skin contact areas are separated to allow the film to thoroughly dry.
- Allow Cavilon to dry fully before applying adhesive tapes. Re-application of Cavilon is necessary each time the adhesive tapes are changed as the barrier film is removed by the adhesive.
 - Cavilon will wear off naturally, but if you wish to remove the barrier film, you can use a medical adhesive remover (such as Appeel®).

Step 4 - Prepare the Narrow Tapes

1. Open the pack of narrow adhesive tapes and cut the tapes into thirds.
2. You will need at least 4 pieces (thirds) of tape to hold each splint in place.
3. Leave the backing on until you are ready to use each piece of tape.

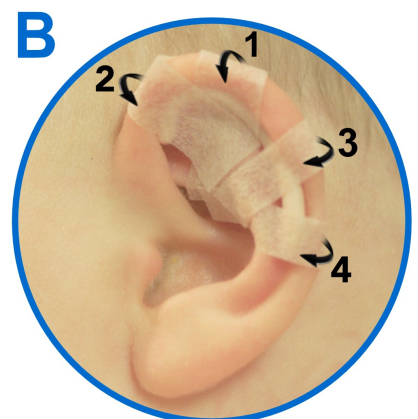


Top Tip - if you are unfamiliar with any of the terminology below, please see 'Anatomy of the Ear' on our Website.



Step 5 - Put splints in place and fix with Narrow Tapes

- Your pack contains two splints - one for each ear; there is no need to fit a splint to both ears if only one is misshapen or sticks out.
 - The splints should be manipulated to the required shape. The splints need to fit snugly inside the helical rim, so checking and adapting the shape of each splint to fit the scaphal hollow of your baby's ears is essential.
 - [See Figure A](#) - Apply the splint to the scaphal hollow (A1), inside the rim (helix) (A2) of the ear, starting just above the triangular fossa (A3), and working backwards.
- [See Figure B](#) - Remove one narrow tape strip from its backing. Starting from the back of the ear at the middle of its curve (B1), stick it down over the skin and the splint so that the rim of the ear is rolled over the splint. Affix three more pieces of narrow tape in the same way in positions B2, B3 and B4.
 - When the splint is held in place with the narrow tapes, it is often possible to gently manipulate the ear and the splint together, to refine the shape.
 - Once the splint is in position, and the ear taped back against the side of the head (Step 6), the splint will reshape the antihelix and maintain the curve of the helical rim.



Step 6 - Use Wide or SuperWide tape to hold the ear to the side of the head.

1. Open the pack containing the Wide or SuperWide adhesive tapes.
2. If using the SuperWide Tapes, you may wish to shorten them by up to 3 cm. Although shortening the tapes will give less adhesion, it will make them less conspicuous. You may be able to cut the excess SuperWide tape ends into narrow tapes to hold the splint in place next time you change the tapes.
3. Rounding the tape ends with scissors before you remove them from their backing and apply them can help to prevent the edges from lifting and improve their appearance.



4. Use one Wide or SuperWide tape to hold the splinted ear firmly to the side of the head as shown in the picture. Use Wide tape if your baby is under 1 month of age. Use SuperWide tape if your baby is older than this, because the cartilage is stiffer and the ears are larger. The greater surface area of SuperWide tape also helps the tapes to stay in place as older babies have greasier skin, sweat more and are more active.



5. If you are using SuperWide tape, you might find it helpful to put an additional strip of Wide tape at the top of the ear to close off the groove between the ear and the side of the head (as shown in the picture) to discourage any ear tugging, for example, during teething.

6. Do not apply the adhesive tapes under tension or stretched; excessive tension may cause the delicate skin to shear or blister.

That's it! The fiddly bit is done. If the splint is correctly fitted, the ear should now have a greatly improved shape and position beneath the tapes. Once the cartilage hardens in this new position, you should achieve permanent correction.

Top Tip - If the ends of the tapes lift, but the rest is firmly stuck, simply trim the ends and apply some fresh tape on top if necessary.

Step 7 - Headwear

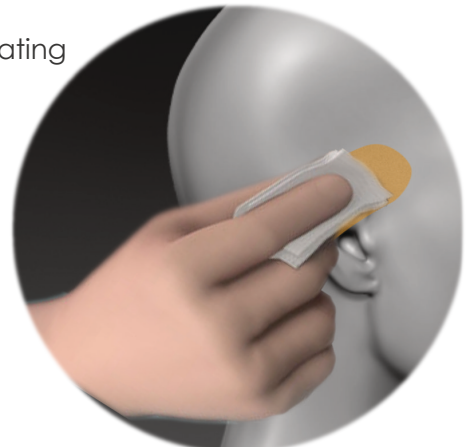
EarBuddies headwear is designed to keep the splints from prying eyes, to avoid the questions that splinting can attract. It can also support the correction and keep baby's inquisitive fingers away from the ears, but if you don't want your baby to wear a hat, then that's fine. Note, you should always check that any headwear is not making baby too warm. We strongly advise against letting your baby wear headwear at night, as this can lead to overheating, and even cot death.

Top Tip - If the area appears sore, and the soreness doesn't settle, remove the tape and splints (see Step 8) and allow the skin to settle before continuing.

Step 8 - Remove the adhesive tapes

It is possible to remove the adhesive tapes using baby soap and water, but most parents prefer Adhesive Remover wipes. Appeel is the preferred option, as it is alcohol-free, sting-free and formulated for sensitive skin. We also sell Zoff which is cheaper, but contains alcohol.

- Appeel is designed to permeate the breathable Adhesive Tapes, creating a layer of silicone, allowing the adhesive tapes to fall away easily.
- Tear sachet to open and fold the wipe into a long rectangle.
- One section at a time, hold the Appeel wipe firmly on top of the adhesive tapes to be removed; it doesn't matter if the wipe directly touches the skin, as Appeel is formulated for the most sensitive skin.
- Allow the adhesive remover to soak in for 30-60 seconds.
- Gently lift off the tapes without pulling at the skin.
- Use the wipe to remove any remaining adhesive residue.
- Appeel rapidly evaporates from the skin surface. Once dry, it will not affect the adhesion of the fresh tapes.



Step 9 - Apply Medihoney® (optional)

- If your baby's skin becomes inflamed during splintage, Medihoney Barrier Cream will help restore the skin's barrier properties, moisture and pH levels. For further information about Medihoney, see our online product page.
- Medihoney should be applied to clean, dry skin using clean hands.
- Apply a pea-sized amount to all areas that appear inflamed; a little goes a long way.
- Leave Medihoney to soothe the skin (with the adhesive tapes off) for as long as it takes for the inflammation to settle (reapply Medihoney after bathing).
- Once the skin has settled, ensure the area is clean and dry before continuing with splintage; adhesive tape will not stick to Medihoney Barrier Cream.
- We would recommend applying Cavilon Barrier Film to the area at this point to protect against any future inflammation during splintage (see Step 3).



Once the splints are fitted...

Once the splints are in place, it is important that the ears do not get wet as this may reduce adhesion and encourage inflammation. It is best to keep baby clean with a damp flannel, and to wash baby's head/hair only when you change the tapes.

If possible, try to keep the splints and tapes in place for two weeks at a time. Change the tapes if they are wet or are no longer doing their job, but not simply because they look a little dog-eared and grubby. By the first time you do this, you should see the beginnings of what can be achieved. In newborns, you can usually make a single application do the trick, but in babies older than two to three weeks, you will normally have to change the tapes at least once.

Inspect your baby's ears (with tapes in place) each day to make sure that they are not becoming inflamed. Because very young babies sweat very little, the tape tends to stick better and for longer than in older babies, and if your baby is newborn, you may not need to change the tape at all. As your baby gets older, it is likely that the tapes will work loose more easily, as baby sweats more and is more active, and tapes may need changing more often.

When changing the adhesive tapes, and prior to bathing, remember to shave any hair that has grown since you last fitted the tapes to prevent new hair growth prickling. Don't forget to take photos to record the progress. Additional Adhesive Tape Supplies can be ordered from our online shop if necessary.

TO PREVENT YOUR BABY ACCIDENTALLY SWALLOWING THE SPLINT, IT IS VITAL THAT YOU ENSURE THAT IT IS FIRMLY TAPED IN POSITION

WARNING

Your EarBuddies kit contains medical grade plastics, inert metals and hypoallergenic adhesive tape which should not harm your baby's delicate skin. The device should not be used if the skin of your baby's ear is broken. Should redness or other signs of irritation persist, consult a physician. The device is strictly for external use only, and no attempt should be made to insert the device into the ear canal, nor internally elsewhere.

EarBuddies will improve the majority of simple problems of shape, contour and position of the external ear. However, they cannot replace missing tissue or guarantee success in all cases. Specialist fitting is usually required for children who will need hearing aids or have microtia.

Record your progress!

Don't forget take photos before and during splintage to record your progress. When splintage is complete, we would love to hear your success story through our online contact form, or enter our Ear of the Month Award to win £50 in Amazon Vouchers!

All you need to do is write a brief outline of your success story, then send it with a before and after picture to earofthemonth@earbuddies.co.uk

