Measurement of temperature

It is important that babies sleep in a room at a reasonable temperature and that they are clothed and wrapped appropriately. Although young babies of normal birth weight need to be kept warm, they mature quickly and by 2 to 3 months of age can control their body temperature quite well and lighter clothing in a cooler room is more appropriate. Small babies cannot throw off their bedclothes in the way that older children and adults automatically do when they feel too hot.

Research has shown that most parents heat babies rooms and clothe their infants according to an instinctive 'formula'. As most babies survive, it would seem that this formula cannot be far wrong.

Room temperature

The room should be kept in the range 16 to 20 degrees Celsius

Clothing and bedclothes

The head is the part of the body most concerned with control of loss of body heat and should normally be uncovered when the child is indoors. The effectiveness of clothing is assessed by estimating a tog value. The higher the tog unit, the harder it is for heat to escape through the clothing. In the room temperature range 16-20 degrees Celsius, the baby should be clothed and wrapped in no more than 10-12 tog units with the head uncovered. The following table can be used as a guide to estimate the total tog value of a baby's clothes and bedding.

Vest	0.2		Cardigan	2
Babygro	1		New blanket	2
Old blanket	1.5		Disposable nappy *	2
Jumper	2		Sleepsuit	4
Trouser	2		Duvet	9

(* Less when very wet)

Points to note:

- The total value of the bedding is the sum of the individual tog values of the layers
- Duvets – the tog value is usually recorded in the packaging or on the label. It is more difficult to adjust the total tog value of bedding when a duvet is used instead of blankets
- Remember that swaddling may more than treble the tog value of the item of bedding that swaddles the baby