



**Tutorial Assembled by Alyssa Leonard**

**Sources linked as much as possible**

# Picking Mesh for a Water Ring Sling

## A water ring sling's fabric **SHOULD...**

- be an athletic mesh, or football mesh material**
- have a regular pattern of small holes**
- have some stretch from selvedge to selvedge**
- be 100% polyester**

## A water ring sling's fabric **SHOULD NOT...**

- contain any rayon, spandex, cotton, or unlabeled "other" materials**
- have any significant stretch from end to end (longways)**
- have large holes that make it look like fishnet**
- be labeled "utility mesh"**



images sourced from [www.stylishfabric.com](http://www.stylishfabric.com)

## What kind of rings should I use for a ring sling?

Small rings. Aluminum and nylon are both acceptable.

## Can I wear it out of the water for a good hot-weather wrap/sling?

Not recommended. Polyester is notoriously slippery when dry and can slip through the rings. Some moms get around this by tying a knot in the tail right below the rings to "lock" it in place, but for a dry-use, hot-weather wrap, you are much better off using linen or osnaburg.

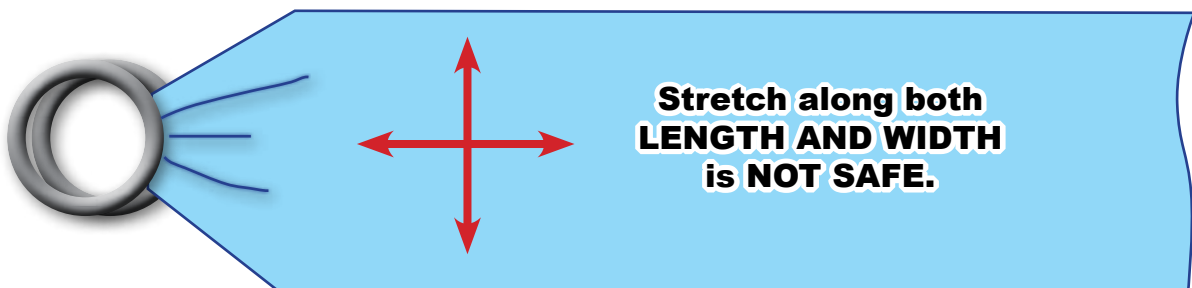
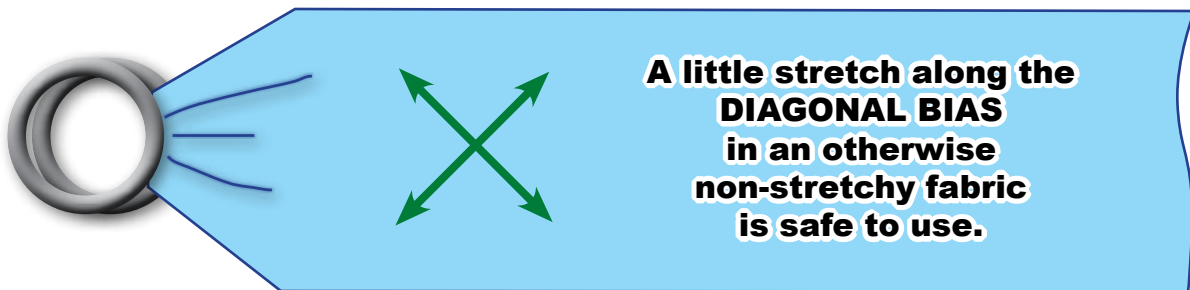
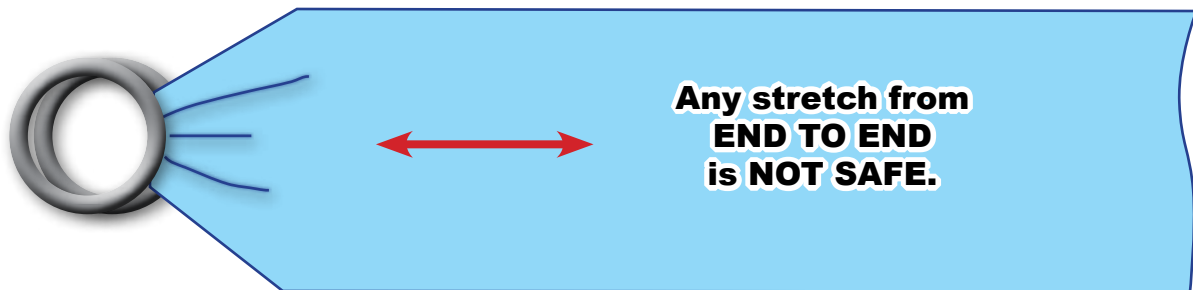
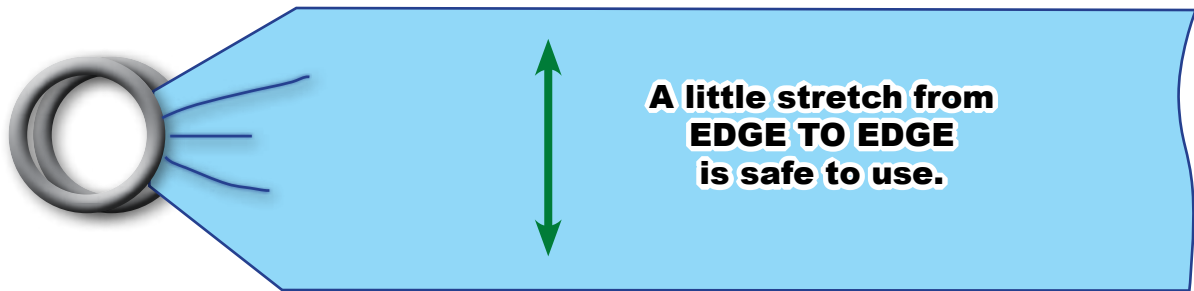
## How long of a wrap should I make?

As long as your mesh doesn't stretch in all four directions, you are fine to make however a long a wrap as you want. You can make a short (size 1 or 2) wrap for a simple rebozo carry, or do a base size wrap to do a three-pass FWCC or PWCC.

## Why can't I just use my cotton/linen/etc wrap in the water?

Natural fibers absorb water and swell, causing a normally comfortable wrap to become exponentially heavier, saggier, and dig into your shoulders along the rails. Also, rayon/tencel/bamboo actually becomes weaker when wet and so there is a risk of tearing.

# Can my ring sling be stretchy?



# How much fabric should I buy?

**For a ring sling, length is simply a matter of how long you want your tail to be. You need a minimum of 12" of tails beyond the rings for safety. Some people prefer a tiny 12" tail, while others like a very long tail that can wrap around the rings or double as a nursing cover or burp cloth.**

**Calculate the length of your finished sling + the amount you need to sew your shoulder (more on that later) plus a few inches for hems and then multiply that amount x1.1 to approximate how much fabric you should buy (the 1.1 adds 10% for shrinkage.)**

**When in doubt, buy a little extra, and save hemming the end of your tail until last. That way you can try it on with baby, pick how long you want it to be, and then cut and hem it.**

Ring Slings	Approximate T-shirt Size for Tail to Hip	Meters	Inches	Yards
<i>Width</i>		0.7m - 0.8m	26" - 32"	0.7y - 0.9y
<i>Amount needed for shoulder</i>		0.1m - 0.3m	4" - 13"	0.1y - 0.4y
XS	Small	1.7m	65"	1.8y
Small	Medium	1.8m	70"	1.9y
Medium	Large	1.9m	75"	2.1y
Large	XLarge	2.0m	80"	2.2y
XL	2XL	2.2m	85"	2.4y

# What rings should I buy?

The best rings available in the United States are from [www.SlingRings.com](http://www.SlingRings.com)  
Canadian source for official SlingRings.com rings: [www.BabywearRings.ca](http://www.BabywearRings.ca)  
UK source for rings: [www.littlezenone.com](http://www.littlezenone.com)

Both SlingRings' aluminum and nylon rings are rated to a minimum 250lbs. Aluminum rings are typically preferred because they are thinner and widely considered prettier, but it is simply up to personal preference. A lot of people prefer nylon for water ring slings, but either will work for both wet and dry applications.

You CAN buy rings from a hardware store (NOT a craft store - craft rings are not weigh tested) but you'll want to go with very thick rings and check for a very smooth weld that won't snag your fabric.



Aluminum	Small	Med	Large
Inner Diameter	2"	2.5"	3"
Outer Diameter	2.5"	3"	3.5"

Nylon	Small	Med	Large
Inner Diameter	2.25"	2.75"	3"
Outer Diameter	3"	3.325"	3.625"

Pictures and information sourced from [SlingRings.com](http://SlingRings.com)

## Large Rings:

Ideal for most Ring Slings. Allows for easy adjustment.  
Great for osnaburg, wrap conversions, tablecloth conversions, and duck cloth.  
Good for beginners.

## Medium Rings:

More grip; more difficult to adjust.  
Better for ring slings from thinner fabrics (such as 5oz linen) or for advanced wearers.  
Good for ring finishes on woven wraps.  
Preferred by some advanced wearers for water wraps (can slip too much.)

## Small Rings:

Good for water ring slings from athletic mesh.  
Perfect for onbuhimos, ruck-bus/reverse onbus, ring-waist mei tais  
Good for ring-waist pouches  
Usable as toy loops on carriers



## Sew Your Shoulder



**No hemming is needed for an athletic mesh wrap or sling!  
You can if you wish to, but it is merely a cosmetic decision.**

**Most water ring slings utilize a pleated shoulder. Once the sling is wet, it will be IMPOSSIBLE to adjust anything, so you may be better off with a pleated shoulder that will stay neat and pretty.**

**Jan at Sleeping Baby Productions has a great [YouTube Video](#) tutorial.**

### **FYI:**

**While you CAN use athletic mesh for a short wrap (rebozo) with a slip knot instead of a ring sling, it is NOT recommended for use as a no-sew ring sling. If you want rings, sew them in place. Athletic meshes simply slips way too much when dry.**

## Learn to use it!

Current BWI safety recommendations include wearing babies upright tummy to tummy (not in a cradle carry position) to help ensure a clear airway and legs outside of the sling in an M position from birth to make sure the baby's weight is on their bum instead of their feet.

## The **T.I.C.K.S.** Rule for Safe Babywearing

Keep your baby close and keep your baby safe.

When you're wearing a sling or carrier, don't forget the **T.I.C.K.S.**



- ✓ TIGHT
- ✓ IN VIEW AT ALL TIMES
- ✓ CLOSE ENOUGH TO KISS
- ✓ KEEP CHIN OFF THE CHEST
- ✓ SUPPORTED BACK

A water ring sling threads and uses just like a regular ring sling. Make sure your carry is solid before entering the water - there is **NO** adjusting once it is wet. These are several videos on YouTube that can help you get started. If you need further help, look for a babywearing group locally or on Facebook.

### Some good videos:

#### **“Quick ring sling threading finger walk tutorial” - Jennah Watters**

Threading your ring sling and “finger walking” to keep the fabric straight in the rings.

#### **“Troubleshooting ring sling threading and adjusting” - Jan Heirtzler**

More troubleshooting if the basics of threading and tightening are confusing.

#### **“How to use a Ring Sling with a Newborn” - WrappingRachel**

WrappingRachel is a **GREAT** channel for learning.

#### **“Babywearing (basics) : Ringsling (classic)” - WrapYouInLove**

WrapYouInLove's wordless videos set to soothing music are great if you are watching while trying to get a baby to sleep at 3 in the morning. This video is also great for seeing how a ring sling looks with an older child.

### Bonus: Safety Advice

Many people look at a water ring sling and think it would make a great out-of-water, hot-weather option. While some moms do this with no problems, it is **NOT** recommended. Even with small rings, athletic mesh is **VERY** slippery and can slip through the rings when dry. If you want a great hot-weather option, try a ring sling made from 5oz linen. [Fabrics-store.com](http://fabrics-store.com) runs sales on their linen regularly.

Also, whether you are using your mesh as a ring sling or a wrap, remember that it is **NEVER** recommended to wear your baby on your back in the water. You always want to have a clear view of their airway in the water, regardless of age.