

How to track your cycle: observe and record your data

Start a new chart on day one of your period. That means the first day of proper bleeding, enough to need a pad, tampon or menstrual cup.

Record your period by shading the relevant boxes on your [cycle chart](#), the first day is already shaded. Record any spotting before your period on your previous chart with ✱.

Waking temperature

Take your temperature around the same time each morning, give or take 30 minutes. Take it after **at least three hours of sleep** and before you have a drink, get out of bed, or start talking.

To avoid too many beeps, use the memory function. Turn it off as soon as it beeps to indicate your temp has been taken. When you are ready to record your temperature, turn it back on to view your temperature.

To record your temperature, draw a **dot** in the middle of the relevant box and connect the dots. If you miss a day, leave a gap in the line.

To improve accuracy, you can warm up the thermometer by placing it in your mouth one minute before you turn it on.

You can **adjust your temp** if you take it earlier or later than usual, and it's between 5.30am and 11am. Move it up one box for each hour earlier, down one box for each hour later.

Only adjust at crucial time. Note as adjusted in comments or by temp.

Fluid

Notice vaginal fluid during the day, in the shower and when you wipe after using the loo. In the **evening**, shade the relevant box:

- Stretchy (Peak) - clear, wet, slippery and very stretchy fluid. Might look like raw egg white and be streaked with white. Usually lots of it.
- Sticky (Non-peak) - sticky or creamy fluid with very little stretch. White or very pale yellow. Looks like hand lotion or conditioner.
- None (Dry) - nothing much, might be small traces on underwear.

Not sure? Shade the highest box - for example "stretchy" rather than "sticky", and "sticky" rather than "none".

Comments: medication, events and symptoms

Record medication and any events that might disrupt your cycle in the comments box, or under the relevant day. Events might include holidays, illness, immunisation, work deadlines, grief, sudden weight loss or moving house.

Symptoms that might be linked to your cycle can also be recorded. For example, period pain, breast pain, acne, headaches, or changes in mood or energy.

Cycle length

Count from day one of your period to the day before your next period, so if it starts on day 30 your cycle length is 29 days.

Ovulation prediction test (optional)

Useful if your waking temperature or fluid are tricky or difficult to record for any reason. Start testing based on your shortest cycle length and use until the day after you get a LH surge. Follow kit instructions carefully and write results in comments section.

For best results use around 6pm and avoid having a pee, or too much to drink, for four hours before you use the test. The cheap ones (which are fine) normally mean you need to pee in a pot, not on the stick.

Cervix checks (optional)

Another (slightly retro) option if your other fertility indicators are unreliable, or you're curious. To find out more [visit Fertility UK](#).

Interpreting your data

Observing and recording your data is the first step. Check my website or get in touch to find out how to interpret it:

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Days in a month:	Jan: 31	Feb: 28/9	Mar: 31	Apr: 30	May: 31	Jun: 30	Jul: 31	Aug: 31	Sept: 30	Oct: 31	Nov: 30	Dec: 31
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