

## Teaching your baby how to sleep

These are general guidelines for sleep training babies. However, it's important to keep in mind that every baby is different, and what works for one may not work for another. Additionally, sleep training should always be done in a safe and gentle manner.

Here are some steps you can follow for sleep training:

1. Establish a bedtime routine: Create a consistent bedtime routine that includes activities such as a warm bath, reading a book, or singing a lullaby. This will signal to your baby that it's time to wind down and get ready for sleep.
2. Place the baby in the crib awake: This allows the baby to learn how to fall asleep on their own, rather than relying on being rocked, nursed, or bottle-fed to sleep.
3. Gradually reduce physical contact: If you have been rocking or nursing your baby to sleep, gradually reduce the amount of time you spend doing so until the baby is able to fall asleep on their own.
4. Be consistent: Stick to the same bedtime routine and sleep schedule as much as possible, even on weekends.
5. Avoid overstimulation: Before bedtime, limit activities that are too stimulating, such as playing with toys or watching TV.
6. Offer comfort: If your baby cries, it's okay to offer comfort, such as a pacifier or rubbing their back. However, avoid picking up and rocking the baby to sleep. Instead, try to soothe them with a calm voice and gentle touch.
7. Be patient: Sleep training can take several nights or even a few weeks, so it's important to be patient and consistent.

**Created by Dr. Julie Wilson February 9, 2023**

## **Making a regular schedule for your baby**

1. Establish a consistent day/night schedule for your baby by creating a clear difference between the two. In the morning, make the environment bright and lively by opening the curtains, turning on lights, increasing noise levels, and interacting with your baby. In the evening, create a calm and quiet environment by dimming the lights, closing the curtains, and keeping noise levels low during feeding and care times.
2. Observe your baby's behavior for a few days to determine the best time for their first feed of the day. Typically, 7 a.m. is a good starting point as it coincides with the shift from night to day.
3. For the first week, aim to feed your baby at 7 a.m. every day. If the baby is asleep, gently wake them up 15 minutes before 7 a.m. If they wake up before 7 a.m., comfort them until it's time for the first feed. After a few days, the baby should start to adopt the 7 a.m. feeding schedule.
4. Once the first feed has been established, set the second feed at 10 a.m. This will lead into the third feed at 1 p.m., which is when the baby will start to have solid food for lunch.
5. Once the first three feeds have been established and the baby is consistently following the schedule, the rest of the day's feeds should fall into place on their own. This regular feeding schedule may also lead to the baby sleeping through the night.

EXPLANATION: In the early weeks of life, it's important to feed your baby on demand to establish milk supply and help them regain any weight lost. Once milk supply has stabilized and weight gain is consistent, it's time to regulate the "gut clock." This means creating a consistent schedule for feeding, starting with the first feed of the day at 7 a.m. and establishing two more feeds with intervals in between. This will allow the baby's gut to recognize a daily schedule and help the rest of the day's feeds fall into place.

**Created by Dr. Julie Wilson February 9, 2023**