



Useful Tips for Getting Your Baby to Sleep

Putting Baby to Sleep

- **Following a flexible routine.** Very young babies really only do three things - feed, play, sleep. And while it pays to take the flexible approach to routine in the early days, try to stick to this order because after a little quiet play, your baby will be tired and more inclined to sleep.
- **Following their lead.** Watch for signs of tiredness. Don't keep your baby up longer than they want, with the idea that they will sleep better and longer once they do go to sleep. Sadly, it doesn't work this way. An overtired baby will struggle to fall asleep and then may sleep only fitfully.
- **Trying a top-up feed.** If your baby has stayed awake longer than usual then it may be wise to give them a top-up feed before bed. Babies sleep better with a full tummy and once you've gotten them to sleep, you don't want them waking because they are hungry.
- **Wrapping.** Try wrapping them in a light-weight muslin cloth. Wrapping often has the effect of calming a crying baby by keeping them stable on their back and stopping them from flapping their arms and startling themselves. As an added bonus, if you consistently use a wrap, your baby will begin to recognise it as a cue for sleep time.
- **Checking their sleeping conditions.** Reduce stimulation by making sure they are sleeping in a quiet, darkened room with good ventilation. A gentle, regular sound of either soft music or the white noise of a fan or a radio between stations can also be soothing.

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- **Letting them cry.** Remember that young babies can only verbalise by crying and most will cry - at least a little - before they go to sleep. Try to view it as a de-stressing session - it's their way of saying, "I'm tired, the day was busy, and now I'm in bed." Let them grumble for a minute or two and you may find that they wind down slowly on their own.
- **Give them time.** It takes everyone a little time to fall asleep - our bodies have to relax, and our brains have to switch off - so don't have unrealistic expectations about how and when your newborn will fall asleep. If you've put them to bed and their eyes are still open 15 minutes later but they are quiet and still, just tip-toe away and let them fall asleep in their own time.
- **Try patting.** If letting your baby cry a little is out of the question for you, or it just seems to fuel the fire then try using a patting technique.

REMEMBER!

Your baby will not harm themselves by crying for a short time. If after a concerted effort, your baby does not settle, change the scenery and take them for a walk in the pram, or give them a massage and a bath.