



First-Time Parent Booklet

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Bottles and Bytes

Built by nanny • Backed by data

Introduction:

Welcome to your comprehensive guide for the care of your little one during the first year! As a Newborn Care Specialist and a Nanny, my goal is to provide the best support for both you and your baby, ensuring a smooth transition into parenthood.

This booklet is designed to offer essential information on sleep routines, feeding plans, common baby issues, and more, all tailored to help you nurture and care for your baby in their first months of life. It covers everything from formula feeding and breastfeeding to sleep plans for newborns and older infants, as well as introducing solids and navigating sleep regressions.

I have compiled this guide to serve as a helpful resource that you can reference during my time with your family, and as you continue on your journey even after I leave. This information will support you in building a strong foundation for your baby's growth, development, and well-being.

Feel free to reach out with any questions as we work together. I'm here to support you every step of the way!



Breastfeeding:

How Often to Feed:

- Newborns: Every 2-3 hours (8-12 times per day)
- 2-4 Months: Every 3-4 hours
- 4-6 Months: Every 4-6 hours (may vary)
- 6-8 Months: May start solids, continue nursing 3-5 times a day

Remember, every baby is different. Feeding schedules may vary, follow your baby's hunger cues and consult your pediatrician or lactation consultant with questions.



Formula Feeding:

How to Calculate How Much Formula Your Baby Needs?

- Offer 2.5 ounces of formula per pound of baby’s weight daily.
- For example, a 6-pound baby needs about 15 ounces of formula in 24-hour period.
- Babies 0-6 months do not eat solids, so all nutrition comes from milk.

Age	Amount per Feeding	Total per Day	Feedings per Day
1 Month	2-4 oz	Varies	6-8 times
2 Month	5-6 oz	Varies	5-6 times
3-5 Months	6-7 oz	Varies	5-6 times
4-6 Months	28-32 oz total	4-6 feedings	4-6 times
7-8 Months	30-32 oz total	3-5 feedings	3-5 times

For exact amounts based on your baby’s weight, use the Bottles and Bytes Formula Calculator:



Introducing Solids (6-12 Months):

Signs of Readiness:

Your baby may be ready for solids if they:

- Can sit up with minimal support
- Have good head and neck control
- Show interest in food (watching you eat, reaching for food)
- Lose the tongue-thrust reflex (don't automatically push food out of their mouth)
- Can grasp food and bring it to their mouth

Best First Foods:

Start with single-ingredient, iron-rich foods:

- Pureed vegetables (sweet potatoes, carrots, peas)
- Mashed fruits (bananas, apples, pears)
- Iron-fortified baby cereals
- Soft proteins (scrambled eggs, lentils, tofu)
- Full-fat yogurt (if dairy is introduced)

Age	Milk Feeding	Solids
6-7 Months	Breastmilk/Formula 4-6 times a day	1-2 small solid meals
8-9 Months	Breastmilk/Formula 4-4 times a day	2-3 small solid meals
10-12 Months	Breastmilk/Formula 3-4 times a day	3 meals + 1-2 snacks

Tip: Introduce one new food every 3-5 days to monitor for any allergies.



How Food Intake Affects Sleep:

As solids increase, babies may sleep longer stretches at night. Here's how nutrition plays a role:

- Iron-rich foods (meat, lentils) support healthy sleep development
- Protein & fat (eggs, yogurt, avocado) help with feeling full longer
- Avoid sugary snacks or juice, especially close to bedtime
- Don't overfeed at dinner to avoid tummy discomfort overnight

Babies still need breastmilk or formula as their main nutrition until age 1. Solids should complement milk, not replace it.



Creating a Sleep-Friendly Environment:

- **Dark Room:**
Use blackout curtains to minimize light exposure.
- **White Noise:**
Helps block out household sounds and soothes the baby.
- **Cool Temperature:**
Ideal room temperature is 68-72°F (20-22°C).
- **Safe Sleep:**
Place baby on their back in a crib/bassinet with a firm mattress.
- **Red Light Option:**
If using a night light, red light is best as it doesn't disrupt melatonin production.



Encouraging Self-Soothing:

- Consistent Bedtime Routine:
The 4 B's: Bath, book, bottle, bed.
- Put Baby Down Drowsy but Awake:
Helps them learn to fall asleep independently.
- Use a Comfort Cue:
Gentle patting or a soft lovey (if pediatrician-approved for age).
- Wait Before Intervening:
If baby fusses, pause for a moment to see if they settle on their own.

Tip: *Sleep regression is common around 4, 8 and 12 months. Stick to routines and offer comfort as needed without creating new sleep habits.*



Nap Schedule:

As your baby grows, naps begin to consolidate and routines become more predictable.

Age	Number of Naps	Total Daytime Sleep	Wake Windows
3-4 Months	4 naps	4-5 hours	75-120 minutes
5-6 Months	3 naps	3-4 hours	2-2.5 hours
6-9 Months	2-3 naps	3-4 hours	2.5-3 hours
9-12 Months	2 naps	2.5-3.5 hours	3-4 hours

Bedtime: Between 6:30-8:00 PM, depending on the last nap.



Sleep Regressions & Solutions:

Common Ages for Regressions:

- 4 Months: Sleep cycles mature; baby starts waking between cycles
- 6 Months: Developmental leaps; learning to roll or sit
- 8-10 Months: Crawling, standing, separation anxiety
- 12 Months: Walking, dropping naps, asserting independence

Solutions & Support

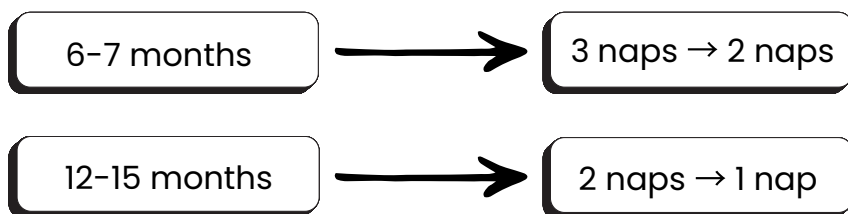
- Stick to routines (bedtime, nap, feeding)
- Offer comfort but avoid starting new sleep habits
- Maintain a consistent sleep environment
- Ensure baby is getting enough milk and solid nutrition
- Allow short pauses before intervening

Reminder: *Regressions are temporary! With patience and consistency, sleep typically improves in 1-2 weeks.*



Transition to Fewer Naps:

As babies grow, they need less daytime sleep and begin consolidating naps:



Signs It's Time to Drop a Nap:

- Baby resists or skips a nap consistently for 5+ days
- Difficulty falling asleep at bedtime
- Early morning wake-ups

Tips for Smooth Nap Transitions:

- Shift nap times slowly (15-30 mins every few days). Be patient, transitions take time.
- Offer earlier bedtime during transitions
- Keep feeding and bedtime routines consistent



Common Problems (Teething, Growth Spurts, Anxiety):

Teething:

- Begins around 4-7 months, peaks between 6-12 months
- Signs: Drooling, chewing on hands, irritability, disrupted sleep
- **Solutions:**
 - Offer teething toys or cold washcloths
 - Massage gums gently
 - Use pain relief as needed (consult pediatrician for medications)



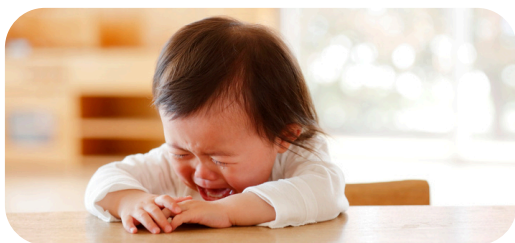
Growth Spurts:

- Common at 3, 6, 9 months, and 12 months
- Signs: Increased hunger, fussiness, frequent wake-ups
- **Solutions:**
 - Feed on demand (extra nursing or bottles may be needed)
 - Provide comfort and patience—these phases pass quickly
 - Stick to a consistent sleep routine

Separation Anxiety:

- Peaks around 8-10 months but can occur earlier
- Signs: Clinginess, crying when left alone, difficulty sleeping
- **Solutions:**
 - Practice short separations and gradual exposure
 - Keep goodbyes calm and consistent
 - Offer a comfort object (like a lovey or blanket)
 - Keep nighttime routines predictable to build security

Remember: *Each baby is different! Adjust approaches to fit their unique temperament and needs.*



Why Babies Need a Routine:

Why Routines Matter:

- Provide security and predictability for babies
- Support better sleep and feeding patterns
- Help regulate emotions and reduce fussiness
- Make daily transitions smoother for both baby and parents



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