

Top Ten Tips To Get Your Baby Sleeping Better

Having a new baby is an incredibly exciting time, but it can also be filled with a great deal of anxiety. One major source of that anxiety is if you have a baby who isn't sleeping well. Sleep deprivation will quickly wear you down, and your baby will be exhausted and irritable as well. When this pattern goes on for months, a once happy little family can rapidly turn into a tired and cranky crowd.

Much of this angst can be eliminated by helping your baby learn to sleep independently. A baby who sleeps independently is usually a baby who sleeps through the night and takes nice, long naps on a consistent basis. Enabling your baby to learn how to sleep better should be a simple and gentle process, and most often your baby even have to shed a tear. This article will provide you with some important tips from the baby sleep book, [Sleep Baby Sleep](#), and will help get you started on your way to having a better sleeping baby and a well-rested house.

#1 Establish a Consistent Nighttime Routine

One important aspect to getting your baby to sleep through the night is to have a consistent bedtime ritual. A solid evening routine will help your child understand that it is time for sleep when the routine is complete. A typical schedule might include a bath, some quiet time, a final feeding, and then a good-night kiss. Though your particular routine may vary, it is important make sure you have some kind of consistency at bedtime.

#2 [Help your Baby Learn how to Fall Asleep Independently](#)

Each time your baby is ready to sleep, no matter what time of day or night it is, you have a brand new opportunity to help your baby learn how to fall asleep without your help. If you try your hardest to seize each of these opportunities, your baby will be sleeping through the night sooner than you can believe. Keep in mind though that this is a process, and not an overnight miracle. Be consistent in your efforts and you will quickly teach your baby how to fall asleep without your help.

#3 Put your Baby to Sleep Awake

If you get only one idea from this article, it's that you need to try to put your baby to sleep while it is still awake. In other words, try to avoid having your baby fall asleep before you put him down. Be sure that your routine includes putting your baby in the crib or bassinet before it is asleep. If you put your baby to bed awake, it will more readily learn how to fall asleep without your help and your baby will sleep much better.

#4 Establish a Daytime Nap Routine

Sometimes figuring out a good daytime routine can be even more challenging than the one at bedtime. Out of sheer exhaustion and the desire to get a few minutes to yourself, you might be inclined to do absolutely anything to get your baby down for a nap. The problem with this is that your baby will begin to need that particular method in order to nap (for example, driving around, rocking, nursing, etc). You won't be happy if your baby can only take a nap in the car, or nap only if you lie down beside her, or only if you rock her to sleep. Instead, try to get your baby napping by falling asleep alone, and you're likely to wind up with a great little sleeper on your hands.

#5 The Family Bed - should you or shouldn't you?

A family bed is not a bad thing, and many families the world over would have it no other way. If it's something you want and have planned for, then by all means do it! On the other hand, if you have wound up with a family bed only because your baby cannot fall asleep any other way, then it might time to rethink your situation. A family bed could last for years, and if unwanted, often results in frustration and resentment and chronic sleep deprivation.

#6 Waking up Throughout the Night

Most, if not all, babies wake up several times throughout the night. Even a baby who is already sleeping through the night wakes up numerous times during the night. The key is that if your baby knows how to fall back to sleep on his own, it won't need you to put him back to sleep. So, don't rush in as soon as your baby wakes up in the middle of the night. Instead, give it some time and you might be pleasantly surprised to find that your baby falls back to sleep on his own.

#7 Getting Baby on a Schedule

Most people thrive on some sort of a schedule, and babies are no different. Your child is likely to function much better if it becomes familiar with the same events that happen throughout the day. If you get your baby on a schedule with a regular agenda, she will quickly figure out when it is time for sleep and will fall asleep much easier. Keep in mind though that everyone needs a little flexibility built into their life, so make sure that you are not too inflexible with your baby's daily routine.

#8 Avoid using Aids to Help your Baby Sleep

Many exhausted parents resort to external aids to get their babies sleeping (for example, constantly using a pacifier, driving your baby around, and rocking or nursing your baby to sleep). Though your baby might initially fall asleep quicker with these external aids, you are ultimately making your job

much more difficult. The problem is that it helps you avoid teaching your baby how to fall asleep alone. Instead, take the time to get your baby falling asleep without any help, and it will fall asleep faster and sleep better.

#9 Be Consistent

The more regular you are in how you put your baby to sleep, the quicker and easier it will be for your child to learn how to sleep independently. No matter how tired you are, or how much you might be dreading the night ahead, a consistent effort will pay off quickly. Be patient with yourself, as it is not always easy to keep with your plan when you are intensely sleep deprived. Just be as consistent as possible, and you will see results.

#10 Take Time for Yourself

It's so easy to forget about yourself when you have a new baby. But playing the parent role 24/7, and having no time of your own could cause you to grow resentful and feel deprived. Instead, make a conscious effort to ensure that you get some time for yourself. You'll feel rejuvenated, happier, and you'll have more energy to devote to your family. You can and will be an amazing parent even though you get a little bit of downtime, and there's no better time to do it than when your baby is sleeping soundly. Enabling your baby to sleep independently is truly a priceless gift that you'll give to everyone under your roof. Your baby will be much happier if it is better rested, and so will you!

About the Author

This article was furnished by Tammy Hussin, J.D., author of Sleep Baby Sleep, a great little book to get your baby sleeping fast, gently and easily. Ms. Hussin is a former corporate attorney and a mother of three boys (all of whom were sleeping through the night by eight weeks old). For more information on the Sleep Baby Sleep technique and/or for purchase information, please visit: SleepBabySleep.com. Questions can also be directed to sleepbabysleep@earthlink.net

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