FREE MINI-GUIDE · BABIES 4 TO 12 MONTHS OLD

The Sleep Starter Guide

Tonight's three things, the safe sleep list, an evening routine, and when to call the pediatrician or 911.



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PART 1 · START HERE

Tonight, three things

1. **Write down every wake-up tonight.**
   Clock time and minutes to settle. A napkin counts.
2. **Check the sleep space against the AAP list.**
   Flat, firm, fitted sheet only.
3. **Choose who does the last check before lights out.**

If you're up at 3 a.m. and not sure what to do

1. Check the sleep space On his back, fitted sheet only, nothing near his face.

2. Hungry, wet, too warm? Sweating or a hot chest: a layer off.

3. Write the time down The only decision this hour needs.

4. Settle him the usual way Same words, low light, back to bed. Something looks wrong?

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PART 2 · SAFETY

Safe sleep first

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The AAP's 2022 recommendations, quoted word for word.

The AAP list

- "Back to sleep for every sleep," until age 1, by every caregiver. Side sleeping is not advised.
- "A firm, flat, noninclined sleep surface." Inclines over 10 degrees are unsafe.
- Room sharing without bed sharing, on a separate surface made for infants, "ideally for at least the first 6 months." A separate surface in the parents' room "decreases the risk of SIDS by as much as 50%" (AAP).
- Nothing soft in the sleep area: no pillows, quilts, bumpers, loose blankets or pillow-like toys.
- A wearable blanket instead of a blanket. The AAP's rule of thumb: one layer more than you're wearing.
- No weighted blankets, sleepers or swaddles on or near your baby.

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- Avoid overheating and head covering. Signs: sweating, flushed skin, a hot chest. No hats indoors, except in the first hours of life or in the NICU (AAP).
- Couches and armchairs "should never be used for infant sleep."
- Car seats, strollers, swings and carriers are "not recommended for routine sleep." If he dozes off there, move him to a firm, flat surface as soon as possible.

What we don't know yet

The AAP's 2022 policy gives no room-temperature number ("it is difficult to provide specific room temperature guidelines"). One AAP parent page mentions 68 to 72°F as a general comfort range. The test is the baby: see the signs above.

Sources: AAP 2022 policy, Pediatrics 150(1); HealthyChildren.org (2026); Hugh 2014; CDC.

PART 3 · EVENINGS

The evening routine: three versions

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Same steps, same order, 15 to 25 minutes, lights low. The steps matter less than keeping them the same.

Short (15 min)
Feed · diaper and wearable blanket · one book · lights off · one song · crib.

With a bath (25 min)
Feed · bath · lotion and wearable blanket · one book · lights off · crib.

No bath, no fuss (20 min)
Feed · pajamas and wearable blanket · quiet floor play, lights dim · one song · crib.

Tonight: pick one version, write its steps on a card, tape it where the second adult can read it.

PART 4 · SAFETY

When to call the pediatrician, and when to call 911

Call 911

- "Difficulty breathing"
- "Skin or lips that look blue, purple or gray"
- "Rhythmic jerking of arms and legs and a loss of responsiveness (seizure)"
- "Unresponsive, unconscious" or "decreased alertness"
- "Rapid onset or quickly spreading purple or red rash"

Call your doctor right away

- Fever, and he "looks very ill, is unusually drowsy, or is very fussy"
- "Stiff neck," "breathing difficulty, an unexplained rash, or repeated vomiting or diarrhea"
- "The fever persists for more than 24 hours in a child younger than 2 years"

Mention it at the next visit

- Snoring, or "loud or heavy breathing while sleeping"
- Night waking in a baby who's growing and gaining weight steadily

This page quotes the AAP. It doesn't interpret. Your pediatrician does.

Act now

In danger? Call 911 or your local emergency number. Urgent questions: your pediatrician's office (most have an after-hours line). Struggling yourself? Tell your doctor or your baby's pediatrician; in a crisis, call 911.

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PART 5 · YOUR NEXT STEP

Ready for the months ahead?

You have a first night plan, the safe sleep list, an evening routine and the warning signs. **The Month-by-Month Sleep Map** goes further: what usually changes at each month from 4 to 12, fourteen example nights at your pace, and a bonus guide, The 3 A.M. Companion.

The Sleep Map is $20. With code **SLEEP30** it's **$14 for both guides**. Tap the link, then type SLEEP30 in the promo code box at checkout.

sleepmap.s.gy/mini

This guide is general information only, not medical advice, and it does not replace your pediatrician. Every baby is different. If you are worried about your baby's health or breathing, call your pediatrician right away, or 911 in an emergency. How you use this guide is your own choice.

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