

Tinies

The Childcare Experts

Guide to Good Sleep for Babies



Sleep is the single most important ingredient to a healthy, happy life, for both parents and baby. Without sleep, energy levels drop, immune systems crash and tempers flare.

One of the key elements to improving quality of sleep is to create a safe, comfortable, and healthy sleeping environment. Here are some thoughts on what you can do to ensure your baby gets the most from their sleep....

Good Sleep for Babies

How should the baby be put to bed?

- Place your baby on their back to sleep and not on their front or side
- Do not cover your baby's head
- Place your baby with their feet to the foot of the cot to prevent them wriggling down under the covers



How warm should my baby's room be?

- Place a thermometer above the cot to monitor the room temperature. 18 degrees Celsius or 65 degrees Fahrenheit is the ideal room temperature
- Babies find it difficult to regulate their body temperature and a mattress that doesn't disperse heat can cause interrupted sleep patterns and a sleepless night for you as well. Therefore make sure your mattress and bedding is breathable and well ventilated
- To check if your baby is too hot, look for sweating or feel the back of your baby's neck or their tummy. Don't worry if their hands or feet are cool - this is normal

What kind of bedding is needed and how should it be used?

- If your baby is under 12 months, do not use any soft bedding, such as duvets, quilts or pillows. Instead, use one or more layers of light blankets
- All bedding should be tucked in around the mattress, covers should be no higher than armpit level and the arms should not be tucked in
- Make sure that the mattress is supportive and does not have any indentations or sagging this will affect the support and in turn the quality of sleep. It is essential to a healthy and safe sleeping environment that the mattress and any waterproof protectors are kept clean and dry. If appropriate the coverings should be washed regularly
- Ensure that each child has a new mattress as bacteria from one baby can be passed to the next, this is recommend by The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths (FSID)

Can my baby share my bed?

The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a cot or crib in your bedroom for the first six months. There is a proven risk in sharing a bed with your baby if you (or your partner) smoke, even if you never smoke in bed or at home, have been drinking alcohol, take drugs or medication that make you drowsy, or if you feel very tired. There is also a risk in bed-sharing if your baby was born prematurely, was small at birth or is less than three months old.

Finally, it also helps if you...

- Do settle your baby to sleep - day and night - with a dummy which can reduce the risk of cot death
- Do breastfeed your baby as this helps reduce the risk of cot death
- Do establish breastfeeding before starting to use a dummy

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This resource has been written in association with The Natural Mat Company who provide a range of hand-crafted natural fibre baby mattresses and bedding that are superbly comfortable, breathable, washable and non allergenic ensuring the best possible night's sleep for baby and parent. www.naturalmat.com



All information and advice contained in this resource are meant as guidance only.