

THE SLEEP PROGRAM THAT WORKED FOR ME

1. Decide what time you want to put your baby to bed.
Any time will work, but it needs to be same time every night. Routine consistency is extremely important.
2. When the predetermined time draws near, give your baby a warm bath while talking and singing to her softly. Babies aren't dirty enough to need a bath every night, of course; but this soothing routine will signal that it's time to wind down and go to sleep.
3. After your baby's bath, wrap him in a towel, then diaper, dress, and feed him in the nursery with no one else around. Keep the lights and noise low. Speak in whispers and lullabies.
4. Next comes bedtime. Choose a ritual you are comfortable with—you can feed, rock, then lay her in the crib; or you can feed her and then read a book. The elements of the routine don't matter, so long as they are the same every night.
5. When your baby is ready for bed, gently lay him in the crib. (Don't worry about whether he is asleep or awake.)
6. Stroke her head or tummy several times and whisper a few comforting words, such as "Night-night, sweetheart. Mommy love you." Again, what you say is not as important as saying the same thing every night.
7. Leave the room (the hardest part). Your baby may fall asleep immediately, or he may awaken and begin to cry.
8. If she does cry, let her do so for ten to fifteen minutes. Then quietly go back in, stroke her on the tummy or head, repeat your night-night phase, and leave again. (Don't pick up your baby; it will stimulate and awaken her even more.)
9. Repeat the above step until he is sound asleep. The first few nights will be the hardest, but each night he will get better at self-soothing. Eventually he will become a great sleeper, and you will have your nights back again.



**Some pediatricians recommend waiting until the baby is six months old before letting her cry it out; others say three months is plenty. Be sure to check with your pediatrician before implementing any sleep system to make sure it is healthy for you baby.*