

Your 6-month-old's sleep

Personalized guide · sleep rhythm, challenges, schedule and tips for this stage

AWAKE TIME 2 h – 3 h	NAPS PER DAY 3	TOTAL SLEEP / 24 H 12–15 h	NIGHT · NAPS 10–11 h · 3–4 h
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What's happening with sleep now

Your baby is stepping into a big new chapter. Around six months, solids usually begin as a playful complement to milk (which stays the main event for now), and you may notice that nights are finally capable of real consolidation. Where feeds and wakes once scattered unpredictably through the dark, many babies at this age can string together longer stretches of night sleep.

During the day the shape settles into roughly three naps: two more substantial sleeps and a shorter third catnap in the late afternoon that simply tops up the tank before bedtime. Wake windows stretch a little now, so your baby can comfortably stay up for chunks between sleeps without tipping into overtiredness. It is this daytime rhythm, more than any single trick, that carries the good nights.

This is the stage where the structure of the day starts to matter most. A predictable flow of wake, feed, play and sleep gives your baby the rails to settle well. You don't need a rigid clock, but a familiar order and calm, consistent wind-downs help their body learn what comes next and make consolidated nights far more likely.

A sample day

7:00 wake-up		If they wake at 6:00	
7:00 AM	Wake up	6:00 AM	Wake up
9:19 AM – 10:34 AM	Nap 1	8:34 AM – 9:49 AM	Nap 1
12:53 PM – 2:08 PM	Nap 2	12:23 PM – 1:38 PM	Nap 2
4:27 PM – 5:42 PM	Nap 3	4:12 PM – 5:27 PM	Nap 3
8:01 PM	Bedtime 	8:01 PM	Bedtime 

Common challenges — and what helps

The third nap turns into a daily battle. That short late-afternoon catnap gets harder to win, with long fights in the cot or a flat refusal, and it is often the first quiet sign that the three-to-two nap transition is on its way.

Keep the third sleep as a genuine catnap rather than a long nap, and cap it so it doesn't steal bedtime pressure. On days it simply won't happen, treat it as a signal rather than a problem and bring bedtime earlier to bridge the gap. An earlier bedtime is your best pressure valve so an overtired evening doesn't follow.

Early rising creeps in, with your baby waking and ready to start the day well before you are. It is one of the most common frustrations at this age and usually reflects the day's balance rather than a fixed body clock.

Check that the last wake window before bed isn't too long and that the day isn't ending overtired, which paradoxically fuels early waking. An earlier, calmer bedtime often buys a later morning. Keep early mornings dark and low-key so they read as still-night, not start-of-day.

Split nights or fragmented sleep as new motor skills bubble up. Babies who are learning to roll, sit or shuffle often practise at night, waking to rehearse in the cot and struggling to switch off the new trick.

Give those skills plenty of daytime floor practice so the body gets its fill of rehearsal while awake. At night keep your response calm and low-stimulation, gently helping them resetttle without turning it into playtime. This is a passing phase that fades as the skill becomes second nature.

What's coming next

The road ahead brings the well-known eight-month wobble, when big motor leaps like crawling and pulling up meet a new wave of separation awareness and can briefly rattle sleep. Around the same eight-to-nine-month window, the drop of that third catnap usually completes and your baby moves toward a steadier two-nap day. Holding your calm routines now is the best preparation for both.

What helps most right now

- ☾ Anchor the day with a predictable order of wake, feed, play and sleep so your baby always knows what comes next, without watching the clock too rigidly.
- ☾ Treat the third sleep as a short catnap and cap it, and on no-nap days simply bring bedtime earlier to protect the evening.
- ☾ Give generous daytime floor time to rehearse new skills like rolling and sitting, so there is less urge to practise them at night.
- ☾ Keep night wakings dark, quiet and low-key, offering calm reassurance rather than lights, play or long interactions.

Safe sleep

Safe sleep (the essentials): your baby sleeps best and safest **alone, on their back, in a clear cot** — firm flat mattress, no pillows, duvets, bumpers or soft toys. Room-share without bed-sharing, especially before 6 months, and avoid overheating. If you ever have concerns about your baby's breathing or rest, talk to your pediatrician.

When to check with your pediatrician

When to check with your pediatrician: sleep varies a lot from baby to baby, but do mention it to your doctor if you notice **loud snoring, pauses in breathing, or very laboured breathing**, if your baby isn't gaining weight or is feeding poorly, if they consistently sleep far less (or more) than expected and seem unhappy or unusually drowsy, or if anything about their development worries you. This guide is general guidance and not a substitute for medical advice.

And tomorrow, and next month?

This guide is the average for their age. The **Nana** app learns your baby's real rhythm and adjusts naps and bedtime every day. Free to start → nanababy.app · Also online: <https://nanababy.app/6-month-old-sleep-schedule/>