

Your newborn's sleep

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

AWAKE TIME 45 min – 1 h	NAPS PER DAY 4–6	TOTAL SLEEP / 24 H 14–17 h	NIGHT · NAPS 8–9 h · 7–9 h
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What's happening with sleep now

In these first weeks your baby is sleeping a huge amount, spread in short bursts around the clock rather than in one long block. That is exactly how it is meant to be. Newborn sleep runs on cycles and on feeding, not on the time of day, so a stretch that ends after forty-five minutes or after three hours is both perfectly normal. The internal body clock that will one day tell night from day simply hasn't switched on yet.

The reason nights feel so relentless is that your baby's tiny tummy needs refilling often, and hunger will always win over the clock. Sleep pressure builds fast at this age too, which is why wake windows are so short: from waking, most newborns are ready to sleep again within about forty-five minutes to an hour. Miss that window and an overtired baby often becomes harder, not easier, to settle. Day-night confusion, where the longest wakeful, alert spells land at 2am, is a classic and temporary feature of the newborn brain.

A realistic day has no fixed shape. Expect four to six naps of wildly varying length, frequent feeds, and a night broken into a few chunks. Some 24-hour periods total closer to fourteen hours of sleep, others closer to seventeen, and both are fine. Your job right now is not to build a schedule but to follow your baby, feed responsively, and rest whenever you can.

A sample day

7:00 wake-up		If they wake at 6:00	
7:00 AM	Wake up	6:00 AM	Wake up
7:53 AM – 8:53 AM	Nap 1	6:53 AM – 7:53 AM	Nap 1
9:46 AM – 10:46 AM	Nap 2	8:46 AM – 9:46 AM	Nap 2
11:39 AM – 12:39 PM	Nap 3	10:39 AM – 11:39 AM	Nap 3
1:32 PM – 2:32 PM	Nap 4	12:32 PM – 1:32 PM	Nap 4
3:25 PM – 4:25 PM	Nap 5	2:25 PM – 3:25 PM	Nap 5
5:18 PM – 6:18 PM	Nap 6	4:18 PM – 5:18 PM	Nap 6
7:11 PM	Bedtime 🌙	7:00 PM	Bedtime 🌙

Newborns run on cycles, not the clock — treat these times as a rhythm and follow sleepy cues.

Common challenges — and what helps

My baby has day and night mixed up

This sorts itself out as the body clock matures, and you can gently nudge it: keep days bright, chatty and full of normal household noise, and keep night feeds calm, dim and boring with minimal talking. Get outside in daylight when you can, as light exposure is the strongest signal for a developing rhythm.

She'll only sleep on me and wakes the moment I put her down

Contact napping is normal newborn behaviour and completely fine when a wide-awake, sober adult is holding her and following safe-sleep rules. If you need to put her down, try transferring after she reaches deep sleep (limbs floppy, about ten to twenty minutes in), always onto a firm, flat, empty surface on her back.

His naps are so short

At this age a twenty-minute nap and a two-hour nap are both normal, so short naps are not a problem to fix. Focus on catching early tired signs and offering the next sleep before overtiredness sets in, rather than trying to lengthen any single nap.

What's coming next

Two things are on the horizon. Around six to eight weeks many babies hit a peak of fussiness and evening crying that can feel intense but usually eases by three to four months. Then comes the biggest change of all: at around four months your baby's sleep matures toward a more adult-like, multi-stage cycle, often called the four-month regression. It can bring more frequent waking, but it is a permanent step forward in brain development, not a step back. You don't need to do anything now except keep responding warmly; a few gentle, repeated cues at sleep time will quietly lay the groundwork.

What helps most right now

- ☺ Learn early tired signs (staring, glazing, a first yawn, jerky movements) and offer sleep before crying starts, since an overtired newborn is much harder to settle.
- ☺ Always place your baby to sleep on their back, on a firm flat surface, with nothing loose in the space, for every sleep day and night.
- ☺ Expose your baby to natural daylight during the day and keep night feeds dim and quiet to help the body clock develop.
- ☺ Protect your own rest: sleep when you can, share nights if you have a partner, and accept help, because a rested carer copes far better.

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/newborn-sleep-schedule/>