



# THIS WAY TO THE LAND OF NOD

Yes, you can teach your newborn to sleep. It takes practice and perseverance but you'll be paid back in zzzzzs, says sleep nanny Lucy Shrimpton

**T**hey might have a rep for being superhuman sleepers, but babies aren't born knowing how to settle themselves – especially on a day/night basis. So you'll need to lend a hand. The first foggy days are just about getting to know each other, but after two to three weeks, it's good to help them find a natural rhythm.

Don't worry if you have a shaky start. Parents are scared of 'ruining' things by letting baby fall asleep on them, or by feeding them to sleep. It's OK! It's not till about six months that habits are harder to break.

Still, a routine will help give your baby the best chance of a longer

night-time sleep. And with a recent survey showing new parents only get four hours, 44 minutes' sleep a night, you'll need that stretch, too!

## BE MORE BORING

The words 'routine' and 'newborn' might not be likely bedfellows. But you can start a bedtime routine as

early as two to three weeks, and certainly by eight. A simple 30- to 40-minute version could include a bath, a feed in the room where baby will 'sleep', then put in a cot or Moses basket by 7pm. The environment needs to get quieter and darker throughout, and you should whisper and be really boring so your baby doesn't get FOMO! At first, they'll probably fall asleep during feeds, which is fine. Just stick to the routine, so they start recognising the sleep cues you're creating.

## WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH

... just keep going. Your baby might wake soon after being put down,



## Sort their sleep...

Find out what type of sleeper you have with our interactive tool: [bootsparenting.com/newborn-sleep](https://www.bootsparenting.com/newborn-sleep)



## STUFF OF DREAMS

Night owl? Meet the cute, calming buys that will help them drift off

### COUNTING SHEEP

**Ewan The Dream Sheep**, £29.99, plays comforting (and familiar!) 'womb noises' to soothe them to sleep



### READYMADE DARK

A **Gro Anywhere Blackout Blind**, £22.99, will help you create a dark environment wherever you are and whatever time of day

### BATH BLISS-OUT

Gently massage **Childs Farm Organic Coconut Baby Oil**, £7.99 (75ml), into their skin after a bath for a relaxed baby



### BEDTIME BUDDY

This clever turtle projects stars on the ceiling and plays a lullaby.

**Pabobo Musical Stars Projector**, see online for details



but stick with it. You may be feeding or rocking them to sleep several times a night, but keep putting them to bed. You never know how close you are to succeeding!

## PRACTISE THE PUT-DOWN

When you hit the six- to eight-week mark, it's time to start helping them learn to self-settle, so put them down drowsy but awake. Each time they fall asleep during the feed, tickle their cheek to wake them – or unlatch them. They may cry at first when put down and you may need to cuddle them, but keep putting them back down. After 18 weeks, leave them a bit longer. They may

still need reassurance, but should be developing those nod-off skills.

## FEEDING AT THE FIRST CRY?

The number one thing parents could do to help babies sleep better? Avoid scooping them up for a feed at the first whimper. If your baby isn't settling, but you know they have a full tummy, a quick cuddle might be enough to send them back to sleep!

## DON'T WAIT FOR THE YAWN!

Get this – a well-rested baby will sleep better at night than a baby who has hardly slept all day. When your baby is overly tired, their body

produces adrenalin to keep them going and they struggle to settle. Newborns only last about 45 minutes between sleeps – so pre-empt naps rather than waiting for them to rub their eyes, yawn and cry. Consider an app such as The Best Baby Tracker, to monitor naps and learn your baby's timings. You'll soon be a well-oiled sleep team.

