

the Peaceful Crib Nap Guide

Gentle, practical strategies to help your baby *transition from contact naps to the crib, stay asleep after the transfer, and extend short naps.*



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DISCLAIMER

The information in this guide is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for individualized medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always consult your child's pediatrician or other qualified healthcare provider with questions or concerns related to your child's health, feeding, growth, development, or sleep.

This guide is designed for healthy babies approximately 4–18 months of age and should always be used alongside current safe-sleep recommendations and adapted to your child's individual needs.

SAFE SLEEP REMINDER

For every sleep, place baby on their back on a firm, flat, level, safety-approved sleep surface with only a fitted sheet. Keep the sleep space free of pillows, loose blankets, toys, positioners, and other soft objects, and follow current safe-sleep recommendations from your child's healthcare provider and applicable health authorities.

Take what serves your family. Leave what doesn't. Trust your instincts. You know your child better than anyone else.



JADE SCOTT RN, BSN

FOUNDER OF WELL ROOTED REST

Hi, I'm Jade—a mom of two and former Labor & Delivery and Postpartum RN.

Well Rooted Rest grew out of my own experience with baby sleep. When my daughter was waking again and again throughout the night, I found myself searching for an approach that fell somewhere between leaving her to cry and simply waiting for sleep to get better on its own.

I wanted something gentle and responsive, but I also wanted practical steps that could actually help us make a change.

That experience became the heart behind Well Rooted Rest. I wanted to help other tired parents find that same middle ground—a way to support their babies while still making meaningful changes toward more sustainable sleep.

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1 CHAPTER



BEFORE YOU BEGIN



PEACEFUL CRIB NAP GUIDE

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

CONTACT NAPS AREN'T A BAD HABIT

If your baby sleeps beautifully curled up against you, **there is nothing inherently wrong with that.** Contact naps can be a sweet, connected season, and if they're working for your family, you don't need to change them simply because someone says your baby should be sleeping independently.

But sometimes, what once worked **stops working for you.** Maybe you need your hands free to care for another child. Maybe you need time to work, shower, eat lunch, or simply have a little space during the day. Or maybe you love some of your contact naps... but you just don't want them to be your baby's only option.

Wanting to make a change doesn't mean you have to suddenly remove the comfort and support your baby knows.

You can help your baby become more comfortable sleeping in their crib while still being responsive and available when they need you.

You can keep the contact naps you love. You can rescue a difficult nap in your arms. You can pick your baby up when they're distressed. You can still gently move towards more crib naps.

GENTLE DOESN'T MEAN DOING NOTHING.

There's a lot of space between holding your baby for every nap and placing them in a crib to figure it out alone.

Throughout this guide, we're going to work within that space—making small, intentional changes, watching how your baby responds, and adjusting the support you offer without expecting everything to change overnight.

The aim isn't a perfect nap. It's giving your baby opportunities to experience the crib as a safe, familiar place to sleep—with you still available when they need you.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

WHICH CRIB-NAP PROBLEM ARE YOU SOLVING?

Crib naps can fall apart at different points. Before changing anything, it helps to figure out where the nap is getting stuck. You may see your baby in one of these—**or a little bit of all three.** That's okay. These problems often overlap. Start with the earliest point where the nap tends to fall apart.

1
“MY BABY
WILL ONLY
NAP ON ME.”

Your baby may take long, peaceful naps in your arms, on your chest, or in a carrier—but attempts to move naps to the crib rarely work.

2
“MY BABY
NAPS IN THE
CRIB...BUT
ONLY FOR 20
MINUTES.”

Getting into the crib isn't necessarily the problem. Staying asleep is. Your baby may wake after one short stretch and still seem tired, cranky, or clearly in need of more sleep.

3
“MY BABY
WAKES
DURING THE
TRANSFER.”

Your baby falls asleep just fine with your usual support, but the moment you start lowering them—or shortly after their body touches the mattress—their eyes pop open.

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CHAPTER
2

SETTING THE STAGE
FOR BETTER NAPS



PEACEFUL CRIB NAP GUIDE

SETTING THE STAGE FOR BETTER NAPS

CHECK YOUR SLEEP FOUNDATION

When crib naps aren't working, it's tempting to focus entirely on how you're putting your baby down. But sometimes the transfer isn't the main issue. Timing, hunger, environment, or even a tiny accidental snooze beforehand can make a perfectly good transfer much harder. Check these 6 areas.

1 | TIMING

A baby who isn't tired enough may fight the nap or wake shortly after being put down. A baby who has stayed awake too long may also have a harder time settling and staying asleep.

Wake windows can be helpful starting points, but they aren't exact rules. Use the clock alongside your baby's cues and patterns.

Look for: How long does it usually take baby to fall asleep? Do they seem content or exhausted when they wake? Is the same nap consistently difficult?

2 | HUNGER

It's hard to settle into a good nap when you're hungry. Make sure your baby has had an opportunity for an age-appropriate feed before the nap. That *doesn't* mean feeding has to be removed from your routine—or that feeding close to sleep is automatically a problem.

3 | ENVIRONMENT

Keep the sleep environment simple and consistent:

- Dark or dim room
- Comfortable temperature
- Consistent white noise, if you use it
- Sleep sack, if appropriate
- Firm, flat, empty, safety-approved sleep space

Consistency matters more than creating a “perfect” sleep environment.

4 | THE SNEAKY MINI NAP

Five minutes dozing while nursing, in the car, or on the way home can take the edge off sleep pressure—even if it didn't feel like a “real” nap. If baby suddenly seems wide awake at nap time, think back: *Did they sneak in a little sleep beforehand?*

SETTING THE STAGE FOR BETTER NAPS

CHECK YOUR SLEEP FOUNDATION

5 | DEVELOPMENT

Rolling, crawling, pulling to stand, new sounds, separation awareness, illness, teething discomfort, or an approaching nap transition can temporarily change sleep.

If naps were going well and suddenly aren't, something developmental may have changed—not necessarily anything you did.

6 | THE PATTERN

One weird nap is just one weird nap. Instead of changing your routine after every difficult day, look for patterns over several days. Is the same nap consistently short? Is baby repeatedly fighting sleep? Does a small timing adjustment seem to help?

Patterns give us better information than one difficult nap ever will.

Don't change all six things at once.

If something seems off, make one small adjustment and watch what happens. When we change timing, routine, environment, and settling all at once, it's almost impossible to know what actually helped.



SETTING THE STAGE FOR BETTER NAPS

A SIMPLE PRE-NAP ROUTINE

Babies don't need a long list of perfectly timed steps before every nap. A short, familiar routine can simply help signal that awake time is ending and sleep is coming next.

The best routine is one that's calm, predictable, and realistic enough to repeat every day.

Try this simple 5-minute routine:

1 — Prepare the room

Dim the lights or close the shades and turn on white noise, if you use it.

2 — Get comfortable

Change baby's diaper if needed and put on their sleep sack.

3 — Slow things down

Move away from stimulating play and spend a brief moment cuddling, rocking, or quietly connecting.

4 — Add a familiar cue

Sing the same short song, read a tiny book, or use a simple phrase such as: "It's time to rest. Mama's right here."

5 — Begin the nap however you're currently supporting sleep

Rocking, feeding, holding, or another familiar form of support doesn't need to disappear just because you're beginning to practice crib naps.

We're adding predictability before we're asking your baby to adjust to something new.

The *first nap of the day* is often a convenient place to begin because it can be one of the more predictable naps for many babies.

WHAT ABOUT FEEDING BEFORE A NAP?

You don't need to suddenly move or eliminate a feed simply because you've heard that feeding close to sleep creates a "bad habit." If feeding is currently part of your baby's nap routine and it's working for you, leave it alone for now.

If the way your baby falls asleep eventually becomes something you'd like to change, you can address that gradually rather than trying to change everything at once.



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3

CHAPTER



FROM CONTACT NAPS TO CRIB NAPS



PEACEFUL CRIB NAP GUIDE

FROM CONTACT NAPS TO CRIB NAPS

START SMALL, NOT ALL AT ONCE

If your baby has spent weeks or months falling asleep warm against your body, the crib is a pretty big change. In your arms, they have your warmth, smell, movement, touch, and closeness. Then they're lowered onto a still mattress and all of those familiar sensations change at once.

So if your baby wakes the second you try to put them down, it doesn't necessarily mean they hate the crib—or that you've created a bad habit.

It may simply mean we're asking them to handle a pretty noticeable transition.

Start small, not all at once.

You don't need to eliminate contact naps to begin practicing crib naps.

Choose the nap that tends to be most predictable for your baby and make that one your practice nap.

Keep the rest of the day supported however you need to so your baby still gets adequate daytime sleep. For now, success might look like:

Baby sleeps 15 minutes in the crib.

That's practice.

Baby wakes and you help them back to sleep in your arms.

Still practice.

The transfer doesn't work and you rescue the entire nap.

You haven't ruined anything.

One crib nap works and the next one doesn't.

Completely okay.

A short crib nap followed by a rescued contact nap isn't a failed nap. Your baby still had an opportunity to experience the crib as a safe place to sleep.

FROM CONTACT NAPS TO CRIB NAPS

TWO GENTLE WAYS TO BEGIN

Not every baby will tolerate the same starting point, so I don't want this guide implying there is one “right” way to begin.

OPTION 1 — Fall asleep with support, then transfer

If your baby currently falls asleep while feeding, rocking, bouncing, or being held, you can keep that support for now.

Let baby fall asleep the familiar way, then practice transferring them to the crib. This is often the gentlest starting place for a baby who becomes very upset when placed in the crib awake.

For now, we're only changing where part of the nap happens—not how your baby falls asleep.

OPTION 2 — Begin the nap in the crib with support

If your baby is already fairly comfortable in their crib, you can experiment with beginning the nap there while staying close.

Depending on what your baby finds comforting, that might look like a hand on their chest, gentle patting, shushing, your voice, or picking them up when they need more support.

The point isn't to put baby down and refuse to help. It's simply to give them an opportunity to experience falling asleep in the place where they'll continue sleeping, with you still there.

WHICH OPTION SHOULD I CHOOSE?

Start with the option that feels like the smallest reasonable change from what your baby already knows. If placing baby in the crib awake immediately leads to significant distress, I wouldn't make that your starting point. Begin with a supported transfer instead.

If baby seems comfortable hanging out in the crib while you stay beside them, you may be able to start there. Follow your baby's response rather than forcing a particular starting point. *Gentle change doesn't require removing comfort all at once. Sometimes the easiest way forward is to keep what is familiar while changing just one piece at a time.*

FROM CONTACT NAPS TO CRIB NAPS

IS BABY READY FOR THE TRANSFER?

If you've ever waited exactly 10 or 15 minutes after your baby fell asleep only to have their eyes pop open the second they touched the crib, you already know: **there isn't one magic number of minutes that guarantees a successful transfer.**

Instead of watching the clock, watch your baby.

Before attempting the transfer, look for signs that their body has become more deeply relaxed.

SIGNS BABY MAY BE READY

- *Relaxed hands and face.* Those tightly curled little fists have softened or opened. Their forehead, mouth, and jaw look loose rather than tense or twitchy.
- *Slow, regular breathing.* Breathing has settled into a calmer, more consistent rhythm.
- *A heavier, relaxed body.* Baby feels less tense or active against you.
- *Less reaction to small movements.* A tiny adjustment of your position doesn't immediately cause baby to tense, startle, or open their eyes.

TRY THE ARM TEST

One simple trick you can try before making your move: Gently lift your baby's arm just slightly and let it go.

● *More relaxed?*

If the arm drops loosely and baby stays settled, that's one clue that they may be ready for the transfer.

● *Still reactive?*

If baby pulls their arm back, stiffens, startles, begins moving, or their eyes flutter open, give them a little more time before trying.

Think relaxed and floppy—not a specific number of minutes. *The arm test isn't a scientific sleep-stage test—just a simple way to notice how relaxed your baby's body feels before attempting the transfer.*

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FROM CONTACT NAPS TO CRIB NAPS

THE FEET-FIRST TRANSFER

You've waited until your baby seems relaxed and ready. Now comes the part that can feel like a high-stakes mission: getting them into the crib without waking them.

There isn't a transfer technique that works every time, but making the transition **slow, supported, and less abrupt** can give you a better chance of keeping baby settled.

1 | Get close before you lower

Bring your body as close to the crib mattress as you comfortably can before beginning to release your baby.

Try to avoid lowering baby from high above the mattress or suddenly extending your arms away from your body. Keep them close to you for as much of the descent as possible.

2 | Lower the bottom half first

Rather than placing baby's whole body onto the mattress at once, gently lower their feet and bottom first, followed by their torso and head. Think:
Feet → bottom → back → head

3 | Don't remove your hands right away

Once baby is on the mattress, pause. Keep one hand gently on their chest or torso and the other supporting them for a few moments. If they're settled, slowly decrease that contact rather than lifting both hands away at once. Think:

lower → pause → release

4 | Move away slowly

If baby's eyes flutter or their body moves, you don't necessarily need to scoop them up immediately. Pause and observe.

If they remain settled, give them a moment. If they begin to fuss, you can offer gentle touch, patting, shushing, or your voice while they remain in the crib.

If they become distressed, respond. The point of practicing a crib nap isn't to see how long baby can manage without you.

FROM CONTACT NAPS TO CRIB NAPS

THE SIDE TRANSFER

For some babies, being lowered directly onto their back can feel like a bigger change from the curled, supported position they were just in while being held. If the standard transfer keeps waking your baby, you can experiment with a side transfer.

1 | Lower baby gently onto their side

Keeping baby close to your body for as long as possible, slowly lower them onto the mattress on their side.

2 | Pause + keep both hands in place

Once baby touches the mattress, don't immediately move them. Keep both hands gently on their body and pause, giving them a moment to settle into the new surface.

3 | Slowly roll baby onto their back

With your hands still providing steady contact, gently and slowly roll baby from their side fully onto their back.

4 | Pause again

Once baby is flat on their back, keep your hands in place for another moment. If they stir, stay still and give them a chance to settle before changing anything else.

5 | Slowly release your hands

When baby seems settled, gradually lighten your touch and remove one hand at a time rather than suddenly taking both away. Think:

*Side → Pause → Roll to back →
Pause → Release*

A FEW TRANSFER TRICKS

These aren't magic fixes—and not every baby will care about them—but they're reasonable things to experiment with.

- **Try pre-warming the crib mattress.** Some parents find the change from a warm body to a cool mattress wakes their baby. If you experiment with pre-warming, completely remove the heat source before placing baby in the crib and make sure the mattress is not hot. Never leave a heating device in or attached to baby's sleep space.
- **Use the same sleep sack or lovey.** A familiar sleep sack or lovey (12 months and up) can provide a consistent sensory cue between being held and being placed down.



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CHAPTER



THE SHORT NAP SOLUTION



PEACEFUL CRIB NAP GUIDE

THE SHORT NAP SOLUTION

WHY IS MY BABY WAKING AFTER 20-30 MINUTES?

WHY IS MY BABY WAKING AFTER 20-30 MINUTES?

You finally did it. Baby fell asleep, the transfer worked, you quietly made your way out of the room...and 30 minutes later, those little eyes are open again.

Before assuming something went wrong, it helps to understand what's happening underneath the surface.

SHORT NAPS ARE NOT ALWAYS A PROBLEM.

Babies naturally move through cycles of lighter and deeper sleep. A nap that ends around the 30-50 minute mark often lines up with the end of a sleep cycle. At that transition, your baby may briefly stir, move, make noise, open their eyes—or wake completely.

As babies mature, many become better able to move from one sleep cycle into another, allowing naps to become longer and more predictable. But this develops differently from baby to baby, and *a short nap does not automatically mean your baby needs to be “fixed.”*

First ask: Does this nap actually need to be longer?

Instead of judging the nap by the number on the clock, look at your baby and the rest of their day.

A short nap may be perfectly okay if...

- Baby wakes happy and content.
- They seem refreshed afterward.
- They comfortably make it to their next nap.
- They're getting enough sleep overall.
- Short naps aren't creating problems elsewhere in the day.

It may be worth troubleshooting if...

- Baby consistently wakes crying or clearly still tired.
- They're struggling to comfortably reach the next nap.
- Several short naps are making it difficult to get adequate daytime sleep.
- Naps have suddenly shortened after previously being longer.
- Short naps seem to be contributing to an increasingly overtired day.

THE SHORT NAP SOLUTION

WHY MIGHT A NAP KEEP ENDING EARLY?

We need to look beyond the sleep cycle itself.

TIMING

Baby may have gone down with too much—or too little—sleep pressure.

HUNGER

Baby may genuinely be ready to eat.

MINI NAPS

A quick snooze in the car, carrier, or while feeding can change the sleep pressure going into the intended nap.

ENVIRONMENT

Light, noise, temperature changes, or another disruption may be waking baby during lighter sleep.

DEVELOPMENT

Rolling, crawling, pulling to stand, separation awareness, illness, discomfort, or other developmental changes can temporarily affect naps.

NAP TRANSITIONS

When sleep needs begin changing, a schedule that previously worked may suddenly stop fitting as well.

24 HOUR SLEEP TOTAL

Consider how much sleep your baby is getting across a *24 hour period*. If your baby is getting a long stretch of sleep overnight, they may naturally need less daytime sleep. *Check age-appropriate ranges for total daytime plus nighttime sleep.*

HOW BABY FELL ASLEEP

Sometimes a baby who falls asleep with a particular kind of support looks for that same support when they stir between sleep cycles. This doesn't mean the support is “bad” but it may be **one piece of the pattern**.

One 27-minute nap doesn't tell us much. *But if the same nap repeatedly ends around the same time, baby consistently wakes unhappy, or naps suddenly changed for several days, that's useful information.* For the next few days, pay attention to:

When baby went down → how they fell asleep → how long they slept → how they woke → how they did afterward.

Those patterns will help you decide what to experiment with next.

THE SHORT NAP SOLUTION

THE SHORT NAP RESCUE

When your baby wakes after a short nap, you don't necessarily have to call the nap over. If they still seem tired, you can give them an opportunity to settle back into sleep—with as much support as they need.

The key is to start small and add support as needed, rather than immediately assuming the nap is finished.

1 | Pause + Observe

If baby wakes but is *calm*, give them a brief moment before intervening.

They may wiggle, reposition, make noises, briefly open their eyes, or fuss lightly as they move through a sleep-cycle transition.

You don't need to rush in at the first sound—but you also don't need to wait through escalating crying in hopes that baby will eventually fall back asleep.

Calm? Give them a moment.
Distressed? Respond.

2 | Try Support in the Crib

If baby isn't settling but remains receptive to your help, try offering the same calm cues you use around sleep:

- A steady hand on their body
- Gentle patting
- Shushing
- Your voice
- Replacing a pacifier, if you use one

Keep the room dark and boring. We're trying to communicate "*it's still sleep time*," rather than beginning the next wake period.

3 | Add More Support If Needed

If crib-side support isn't enough, *pick your baby up*.

Rock them. Hold them. Feed them if they're hungry. Use the familiar support that usually helps them settle. Helping your baby back to sleep isn't undoing the crib nap they just had.

THE SHORT NAP SOLUTION

THE SHORT NAP RESCUE

4 | Give Resettling a Reasonable Try

If baby remains calm enough to continue, you might spend roughly 10–15 minutes seeing whether another stretch of sleep is possible.

This isn't a timer you have to complete.

If your baby becomes increasingly upset—or it's becoming clear that sleep isn't happening—**stop sooner.**

5 | Rescue the Nap

If baby still clearly needs sleep but returning to the crib isn't working, finish the nap using a safe, familiar form of support.

That may mean holding them for the remainder of the nap.

Twenty-five minutes in the crib + forty minutes in your arms is not a failed crib nap.

Baby practiced sleeping in the crib and got the sleep they needed. Both matter.

SHOULD I TRY ANOTHER TRANSFER?

If baby falls back asleep in your arms, you have two reasonable options:

TRY AGAIN

If baby is deeply settled and another transfer feels manageable, you can try the *Feet-First* or *Side Transfer* again.

CALL IT A RESCUE NAP

If you've already attempted several transfers, baby has become upset, or you simply don't want to risk another wake-up, finish the nap with support. **You can try a contact nap, a carrier nap, or a nap on the go in the car seat or stroller.** You don't have to keep transferring until it works.

THE SHORT NAP SOLUTION

A TRICK TO EXPERIMENT WITH

GENTLY INTERRUPT THE PATTERN

If your baby wakes at almost the exact same point every nap—for example, around 30 minutes—you can experiment with gently stirring them shortly before that habitual wake-up.

About 5–10 minutes before their usual wake time, go into the room quietly and gently rouse them just enough to create a small stir without fully waking them. That might look like:

- Gently touching or stroking their cheek
- Lightly placing a hand on their body
- Slightly adjusting their position without lifting them
- Allowing them to stir briefly, then settle again

The idea isn't to wake baby up for the day. You're looking for a tiny interruption—a sigh, small movement, brief flutter of the eyes, or change in breathing—followed by baby settling back into sleep.

Then leave the room and see what happens.

Think “stir,” not “wake.”

If your baby fully wakes or becomes upset, help them settle as you normally would.

If this consistently makes the nap worse rather than better, skip it. It's simply another experiment, not something every baby needs.

PROTECT THE NAP WHILE YOU PRACTICE THE SKILL

You don't have to sacrifice your baby's sleep in order to “learn” crib naps. Some days will contain more practice. Other days will contain more support. Over time, we're looking for a trend toward more comfortable, more successful crib sleep—not perfection at every nap.

THE SHORT NAP SOLUTION

1

PAUSE & OBSERVE

2

SUPPORT IN CRIB

3

PICK UP + RESETTLE

4

RETRY IF IT MAKES SENSE

5

RESCUE THE NAP



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5
CHAPTER

FAILED TRANSFERS &
TROUBLESHOOTING

PEACEFUL CRIB NAP GUIDE

FAILED TRANSFERS & TROUBLESHOOTING

WHEN THE TRANSFER ISN'T WORKING

Even with good timing, a calm routine, and the smoothest transfer you can manage, some naps simply won't cooperate. Instead of assuming crib naps “*aren't working*,” use **where the nap falls apart** as a clue.

“Baby wakes as soon as I start lowering them.”

What may be happening:

Baby may not be fully relaxed yet, or the change in position, movement, warmth, and contact may be enough to bring them back toward wakefulness.

Try this:

- Recheck the relaxation cues from Chapter 3.
- Try the Arm Test before moving.
- Keep baby against your body longer as you lower.
- Move more slowly through the descent.
- Experiment with the Side Transfer.
- If baby stirs, pause rather than continuing to lower immediately.

If it keeps happening:

Reset. Help baby settle again before deciding whether another attempt makes sense.

“Baby's eyes open the second they touch the mattress.”

What may be happening:

The transition itself may be too noticeable—the mattress feels different from your body, or your support is disappearing too quickly.

Try this:

- Use lower → pause → release.
- Keep both hands on baby after they're down.
- Try the Side Transfer: *side* → pause → *roll to back* → pause → release.
- Slowly lighten your touch instead of removing your hands at once.
- If baby opens their eyes but remains calm, don't automatically pick them up. Stay close and see whether your touch, voice, patting, or shushing helps them settle.

FAILED TRANSFERS & TROUBLESHOOTING

WHEN THE TRANSFER ISN'T WORKING

“The transfer works...but baby wakes 5–10 minutes later.”

What may be happening:

Baby may not have been as deeply settled as they appeared, something in the environment may have changed, or they may be noticing the loss of the support they had when falling asleep.

Try this:

- Look at the readiness cues before your next transfer.
- Keep the room conditions consistent before and after placement.
- Stay beside the crib briefly after transferring.
- If baby begins stirring, try crib-side reassurance before assuming the nap is over.
- Look for a pattern across several naps rather than changing your strategy after one attempt.

“Baby screams every time I try the crib.”

This one deserves gentler handling. **Don't keep**

repeating the transfer simply because you're determined to make the crib nap happen.

If baby is becoming distressed before they even reach the mattress:

Stop → regulate → reconnect → protect the nap.

Then try again at another nap or another day. You can also spend a few calm minutes with baby near or in the crib while awake and content, with you right there.

The idea isn't to turn the crib into a play space; it's simply to let the crib exist outside of a repeated “*Mom puts me here and I get upset*” pattern.

Sometimes the most productive crib-nap practice is knowing when to stop practicing.

FAILED TRANSFERS & TROUBLESHOOTING

WHEN THE TRANSFER ISN'T WORKING

“We've tried three transfers and we're both frustrated.”

If you've attempted several transfers and each one ends with your baby waking or becoming increasingly upset, stop and rescue the nap.

Hold baby, reset the day, and try again another time. More attempts aren't always more productive. Sometimes protecting the nap and trying again tomorrow is the better choice. One difficult nap doesn't erase previous progress.

BEFORE YOU CHANGE THE PLAN...

Ask yourself: *Was this one difficult nap—or is this becoming a pattern?*

A single failed transfer doesn't tell us very much. If the same thing happens repeatedly, however, that's when we have useful information to work with. Look for the pattern. Then adjust one thing at a time.



FAILED TRANSFERS & TROUBLESHOOTING

WHEN CRIB NAPS AREN'T CLICKING

Crib-nap progress is rarely perfectly linear. You might get one beautiful nap followed by two disasters, have a great week and suddenly feel like you're back at the beginning, or try every transfer trick in this guide and still feel stuck. *Let's look at what the pattern might be telling you.*

"The first crib nap works, but the others don't."

What may be happening:

Your baby may simply tolerate crib practice better at one point in the day. Sleep pressure, stimulation, previous naps, and overall tiredness all change as the day goes on.

Try this:

- Keep practicing the nap that's working.
- Don't rush to move every nap into the crib just because one is successful.
- Protect the rest of baby's daytime sleep however you need to.
- Once the successful nap feels fairly comfortable and predictable, experiment with another nap.

One reliable crib nap is progress.

"Crib naps were working... and suddenly stopped."

What may be happening:

Before changing your entire approach, consider what else has changed.

Ask:

- Is baby learning a new physical skill?
- Has their usual sleep timing started feeling different?
- Could they be approaching a nap transition?
- Have nights changed too?
- Has there been illness, teething discomfort, travel, or a routine disruption?
- Have little car or feeding naps started sneaking in?

Try this:

Return to the basics for a few days. Keep the routine familiar, offer extra support if baby needs it, and watch for a pattern before assuming you need a completely new strategy.

A setback doesn't always require a new plan.

FAILED TRANSFERS & TROUBLESHOOTING

SUPPORT ISN'T A BAD THING

Imagine falling asleep warm against someone while being rocked, fed, bounced, or held.

Then you briefly surface between sleep cycles and suddenly you're somewhere completely different.

For some babies, that change doesn't bother them much. For others, it does.

If your baby relies on a very specific kind of support to fall asleep, they may notice when that support is no longer there as they move through lighter periods of sleep.

That does NOT mean the support is bad.

*Rocking isn't bad.
Feeding to sleep isn't bad.
Holding isn't bad.
Contact naps aren't bad.*

The question is simply:
Is the way your baby currently falls asleep still working for your family?

*If the answer is yes, **you don't need to change it.***

*If the answer is no, **transfer tricks can only address part of the problem.***

CONSIDER A DIFFERENT APPROACH

If baby can only fall asleep with one very specific form of support and wakes repeatedly when that support changes, the next step may be gradually changing how baby falls asleep, not finding an increasingly elaborate way to get them into the crib without noticing.

And that's a much bigger process than I want to squeeze into a few paragraphs here.

WELL ROOTED NOTE

If you've realized the transfer may only be one piece of the problem, in the complete **Well Rooted Rest Guide**, I walk you through my gradual *Fading Associations Method* for changing sleep support little by little while remaining present and responsive.

We also address bedtime, frequent night wakings, age-appropriate schedules, regressions, naps, and the other pieces that influence independent sleep—**without leaving your baby to cry-it-out.**

[GET THE FULL GUIDE](#)



Well Rooted *Rest*



6

CHAPTER



PUTTING IT ALL
TOGETHER & BEYOND



PEACEFUL CRIB NAP GUIDE

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER & BEYOND

7-DAY GENTLE CRIB NAP PRACTICE PLAN

Your 7-Day Gentle Crib-Nap Practice Plan

This isn't a promise that your baby will be taking perfect crib naps in seven days.

Think of this week as an *experiment*: seven days to practice consistently, learn what your baby responds to, and look for patterns without changing the plan after every difficult nap.

And remember: you only need to practice with one nap at first.

DAY 1 | Observe

Don't change much yet. Choose the nap you want to practice and pay attention to:

- When baby starts showing tired cues
- When you begin the nap
- How long settling takes
- How baby falls asleep
- What happens during the transfer
- How long baby sleeps
- How baby acts when they wake

Today is about gathering information.

DAY 2 | Set the Stage

Run through your **Sleep Foundation Checklist**.

Look at timing, hunger, environment, mini naps, development, and the patterns you've noticed.

Then begin using your simple pre-nap routine.

Don't overhaul everything. Choose one thing that seems worth adjusting.

DAY 3 | Practice One Crib Nap

Choose your most predictable nap and practice one of the two starting routes from Chapter 3.

If you're transferring a sleeping baby, watch for relaxation cues and try the Feet-First or Side Transfer. If it works—even briefly—that counts.

If it doesn't, rescue the nap and move on with your day.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER & BEYOND

7-DAY CRIB NAP PRACTICE PLAN

DAY 4 | Refine

Think about yesterday.
Where did things fall apart?

During the lowering? *Adjust the transfer.*

As soon as baby touched the mattress? *Slow down the pause and release.*

Twenty or thirty minutes later? *Look at the Short Nap Solution. Change one piece, then practice again.*

DAY 5 | Practice the Wakeup

If baby wakes early and still seems tired, practice the Gentle Short-Nap Rescue:
Pause → crib-side support → add support → resettle → rescue if needed.

You're learning what level of support your baby needs when they surface from sleep.

DAY 6 | Repeat

Today isn't about making the challenge harder simply because you've been practicing for almost a week.

Repeat what seems to be working. Stick with one practice nap until it feels more consistent before adding another.

DAY 7 | Look Back

Compare Day 7 with Day 1. Don't only ask:

"Is my baby taking long crib naps yet?" Look for smaller changes too:

- Transfers are working more often.
- Baby stays asleep in the crib a little longer.
- Baby needs less help after the transfer.
- Baby is calmer in the crib.
- I'm getting better at recognizing when to attempt the transfer.
- I'm starting to understand why a nap didn't work.
- One nap is becoming more predictable.
- We're having fewer repeated transfer attempts.

Those are all forms of progress. **Seven days isn't a deadline.** This isn't a promise that your baby's naps will change in one week. Use these seven days to practice, notice patterns, and figure out what helps your baby most.

7-DAY CRIB NAP PRACTICE PLAN

DAY 1

OBSERVE

Watch. Take notes. Learn your baby's patterns.

DAY 2

SET THE STAGE

Check timing, hunger, environment, and development. Use a simple pre-nap routine.

DAY 3

PRACTICE ONE NAP

Choose your most predictable nap. Practice the nap in the crib. Rescue if needed.

DAY 4

REFINE

Analyze how the nap went. Adjust one thing. Try again.

DAY 5

PRACTICE WAKE UP

If baby wakes early, try: Pause → Support → Add support → Resettle → Rescue if needed.

DAY 6

REPEAT

Do more of what's working. Start with one nap, then the next, until it's consistent.

DAY 7

LOOK BACK

Notice the small wins and progress, not perfection.

CRIB NAPS ARE ONE PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

Maybe crib naps are starting to feel a little easier. But maybe you're still...

- Rocking or feeding for what feels like forever at bedtime.
- Getting baby into the crib—only for them to wake 45 minutes later.
- Responding to wake-up after wake-up throughout the night.
- Unsure whether your baby's schedule is actually working.
- Ready to change the way your baby falls asleep, but not comfortable leaving them alone to cry.

That's why I created the complete **Well Rooted Rest Guide**.

This is for you if...

- Your baby needs significant support to fall or stay asleep.
- Bedtime or night wakings are still exhausting.
- You're unsure whether timing, schedule, sleep associations, or something else is contributing.
- You want to make meaningful changes without leaving your baby to cry alone.



EXPLORE THE FULL GUIDE

READY TO STOP GUESSING AT BEDTIME?

Imagine knowing exactly what to do tonight. Instead of piecing together advice from *Instagram, Google, Facebook groups, and well-meaning relatives...* you'll have one gentle roadmap from beginning to end. **The Well Rooted Rest Guide** gives you one gentle, step-by-step plan so you know exactly what to do tonight, tomorrow night, and when things don't go as planned.

But if you're still wondering...

- Where do I actually start?
- What if my baby cries?
- How do I handle night wakings and night feeds?
- What about naps?
- What if we co-sleep, contact nap, or have a very sensitive baby?

That's exactly what the full **Well Rooted Rest guide** walks you through. You'll learn how to gently help your baby move toward independent sleep *without cry-it-out, timed crying, or leaving your baby alone to figure it out.*

Inside the full Well Rooted Rest Guide, You'll Learn How To...

- Gradually fade sleep associations while staying present and responsive
- Know when to offer more support—and when to gently step back
- Navigate frequent night wakings and age-appropriate night feeds
- Build realistic wake windows, routines, and age-based schedules
- Work toward independent sleep from contact sleep, co-sleeping, or significant sleep support
- Troubleshoot short naps, early wakes, regressions, teething, illness, and travel
- Adjust the approach for your baby's individual temperament and needs
- Plus: age-based schedules, troubleshooting tools, trackers, checklists, and printable resources.

If cry-it-out doesn't feel right, but waiting another year doesn't either, this guide was written for you.

[GET THE FULL GUIDE](#)