

Newborn naps: weeks 0 to 12

Sample schedules, what is normal, and what nobody tells you.

A FREE GUIDE FROM
BABY SLEEPING COACH

A note before we start. This guide is for general education only. It is not medical advice. If your child has any medical condition, suspected condition, or symptom that concerns you, please consult a qualified paediatrician before making any change based on this guide. See the full medical disclaimer at babysleepingcoach.com/terms.

Three things nobody tells you about newborn naps

- There is no schedule yet. Stop looking for one.
- The 'eat play sleep' pattern is great in theory and a disaster for breastfed newborns. Feed to sleep when you need to.
- Day-night confusion is normal until about 8 weeks. Bright daylight in the morning is the most effective fix.

Week-by-week

Weeks 1 to 2

Total sleep 14 to 17 hrs. Wake windows 45 to 60 min. Naps anywhere - the carrier, the pram, you, occasionally the bassinet.

Week 4

Total sleep 14 to 17 hrs. Wake windows 60 min. Start a brief bedtime cue (the same swaddle, same lights down).

Week 6

Total sleep 13 to 16 hrs. Wake windows 60 to 75 min. The 6-week growth spurt usually arrives this week.

Week 8

Total sleep 13 to 16 hrs. Wake windows 75 to 90 min. Day-night confusion typically resolves.

Week 10

Total sleep 13 to 15 hrs. Wake windows 75 to 90 min. First nap of the day often more predictable.

Week 12

Total sleep 13 to 15 hrs. Wake windows 90 to 120 min. The end of the 'fourth trimester'.

A 'good day' in the first 12 weeks

There is no perfect day. There is no schedule to print and stick on the wall yet. A good day in the first 12 weeks usually has these features:

- Baby has been fed often (every 2 to 3 hours).
- Baby has had some natural light during the day (open the curtains).
- Baby has slept at least 3 to 4 times, totalling 4 to 6 hours.
- Bedtime fell somewhere between 7pm and 10pm.
- Mom and partner are not crying. Or at least not both at once.

The 3 mistakes I see most often

1. Chasing a schedule too early. Schedules become possible around 12 to 16 weeks. Before that, you are working with biology that does not follow a clock yet. Track patterns; do not enforce them.

2. Keeping baby awake too long. Newborns who are awake more than 90 minutes are almost always overtired. Overtired newborns fight sleep harder, cry more, and take shorter naps. The fix is more sleep, sooner.

3. Waiting for 'tired cues' that come too late. By the time a newborn rubs their eyes and cries, the window closed 10 minutes ago. Watch for the soft eye glaze and the quiet, not the obvious cues.

Want a plan built for your child, not for the internet?

The full Sleep Reset program includes a 90-minute private consult, a 6-page personalised plan, and 2 weeks of text and iMessage support. Book your free 15 min discovery call at babysleepingcoach.com