

# NAP TIME QUICK TIPS

Are naps a source of stress for your family? Here are my quick nap time tips to establish a more consistent and successful nap time schedule

## 1. ESTABLISH A NAPTIME ROUTINE

Creating a mini-routine similar to your bedtime routine, will help to signal baby's brain that it's time for sleep. Changing baby's diaper, reading a quick book, and feeding baby (in that consistent order each time) is a great routine. If you use a noise machine or dim the lights- make sure you're also repeating these actions in a consistent order to further solidify the nap time routine for your child

## 2. TRY "TOPPING OFF"

If your child is still under a year old, consider "topping off" with extra formula or nursing right before putting baby down. For example, if you give baby 80% of her feed, then do the remainder of your routine to burn some extra energy (maybe sing a song or read some books) - then give the remaining 20% of her milk right before putting her down for a nap- you will be giving baby those extra calories and set her up for a nice post-meal snooze that will likely be longer and more restful

## 3. SWADDLE

If your child is young enough to swaddle- try swaddling them before feeding. Swaddling suppresses baby's "startle reflex" and will make for a longer nap that is more predictable. Swaddling will also help to prevent baby from getting distracted or stimulated through touch while you are trying to wind them down for rest.

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## 4. KEEP A LOG

Most babies around 2-4 months of age will begin to have longer and shorter naps at similar times of the day. Do your best to determine when those longer naps are more likely to be- and plan accordingly.

For example, if you know your child's morning nap is consistently about 2 hours, while their second nap is closer to 45 minutes- recognize this pattern and plan accordingly.

If accomplishing tasks during naps is a source of stress- do what you can to give yourself grace. Don't try and over plan your to-do list- this will result in feeling overwhelmed and you will get less accomplished and the feeling of overwhelm will begin to mount.

If you know you can count on one nap of the day to be the longest and most consistent- plan to accomplish your most important tasks right after your child goes to sleep.

That way, even if the nap ends earlier than planned- you will still elevate your stress levels by checking those significant tasks off your list.

You can then use the other, shorter periods for some self-care, netflix binging, or rest for yourself. If you have an older child, you can designate these shorter naps for special one-on-one activities with them.