

Typical Schedule for a 6-8 Month Old

What To Expect At This Age

At this age, babies need an average of eleven hours of uninterrupted nighttime sleep and three and a half hours of daytime sleep spread over two to three naps. From six through eight months, babies become more mobile. They roll over, sit up, maybe even stand while holding onto something. Many scoot or crawl, and the first teeth come in. Most babies sleep through the night fairly regularly, but if yours doesn't, it is still quite easy to get them on track. You may also find that at six or seven months, a baby who had been a good sleeper starts having difficulties. As she experiences her first wave of separation anxiety, she may resist being left in her crib at night or may start waking up more often to see you.

At this point in your child's development, it's essential to promote nighttime security, develop a sleep-friendly schedule, and introduce appropriate wind-down evening activities. As your baby grows, bedtime can be fun as you begin to share quiet songs and games and create family rituals. But first you may have to break some patterns. If your baby is used to being rocked, walked, nursed, or stroked to get back to sleep in the middle of the night, you will need to help her discard those sleep crutches. If she's spent the first few months sleeping in unconventional places, like swings or car seats, you need to get her into the crib. As you make changes you may have to tolerate some tears—but you don't have to let her cry endlessly or alone.

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A good schedule can transform a tired and fussy baby into a rested and contented one. I don't recommend completely rigid schedules, but I do recommend devoting a few weeks to really focusing on your child's sleep. That means building your other tasks, errands, and activities around sleep, naps, and baby meals. Nap training in particular, can be time-consuming for a few weeks. Later on you will have more flexibility—when everyone is

rested.

Here is a sample schedule I would recommend.

- **7:00 to 7:30 a.m.** Wake-up. Upon waking, nurse or bottlefeed and give solids.
- **9:00 or 9:30 a.m.** Morning nap, one and a half to two hours. Upon waking, nurse or bottlefeed and give solids.
- **12:30 or 1:00 p.m.** Afternoon nap, one and a half to two hours. Upon waking, nurse or bottlefeed.
- **3:30–4:00 p.m.** (depending on previous naptime) Optional third nap, about forty-five minutes to an hour.
- **5:00 or 5:30 p.m.** Nurse or bottlefeed and give solids.
- **6:00–6:30 p.m.** Start bath and bedtime preparations, which may include an additional bottle or nursing.
- 7:00–7:30 p.m.** Asleep.