

Night shift plan

Baby's name: _____ Week of: _____ Times are samples. Slide them to fit your baby's night.

1. This week's shifts

Night	9 PM-2 AM	2 AM-7 AM	Notes
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

On duty means awake and in charge of the baby. If someone is nursing, their "night off" still includes feeds, so the on-duty adult wakes them. In the early weeks, the AAP says not to let a breastfed baby go longer than about 4 hours at night without a feed. Ask your pediatrician when it's OK to stop waking your baby.

2. Handoff at shift change (two minutes)

Last feed (time, side or oz)	Last diaper	Last sleep and wake	Anything different? Temperature?	Bottles ready? Pump due?

Who is on next: _____ At: _____

3. Helper briefing: grandparent, nanny or friend

- Baby always goes down on their back, in the bassinet or crib, on a firm, flat surface.
- Nothing soft in the sleep space: no pillows, blankets, bumpers, toys, nursing pillows or loungers.
- Stay awake. Never fall asleep with the baby on a sofa, armchair or cushion. The AAP says the risk of a sleep-related death is up to 67 times higher in that case. Feeling drowsy? Put the baby in the bassinet, on their back.
- If you nurse in bed, clear pillows and blankets away from the baby and put them back in their own space before you sleep.
- If baby dozes off in a swing or car seat, move them to their own crib or bassinet, on their back.
- Losing your temper? Lay the baby in the crib on their back, and step out for about 10 to 15 minutes. Never shake a baby.
- Bottles, diapers and wipes are: _____
- Next feed is due at about: _____
- Pediatrician's number: _____

Sources: AAP, "How to Keep Your Sleeping Baby Safe: AAP Policy Explained," updated 9/11/2026, and "Abusive Head Trauma and Shaken Baby Syndrome," [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org).

4. Bottle prep at night

- **Formula (CDC):** use within 2 hours, and within 1 hour once feeding begins. Not feeding within 2 hours? Refrigerate right away, use within 24 hours. Throw away leftovers. Powder for a baby under 2 months, born before 37 weeks or with a weak immune system: mix with water that was boiled and left about 5 minutes (about 158°F), then let it cool and test a few drops on your wrist. Never microwave.
- **Pumped milk (CDC):** up to 4 hours at room temperature (77°F or colder), up to 4 days in the refrigerator. Label each bottle with the date it was pumped. Throw away milk left in the bottle after 1 hour (AAP). The CDC allows up to 2 hours, so go with the shorter time.
- **Pumping (CDC):** when you're away from your baby, try to pump as often as your baby is drinking breast milk.

Call 911 if your baby is not breathing or stops breathing for longer than 10 seconds, has blue, gray, purple or white lips or skin, is limp, not moving or very weak, or can't be woken. Hard to wake: go to the ER now.

Call your pediatrician right away if your baby is 3 months or younger and has a rectal temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, even if they seem fine. Don't give fever medicine before your baby is seen.

Sources: AAP (HealthyChildren.org symptom checker and "Fever and Your Baby"), Cleveland Clinic "Periodic Breathing in Newborns."

Looking after you. If you or your partner feel hopeless, can't sleep even when the baby sleeps, or have trouble bonding, talk to a health care provider.

- National Maternal Mental Health Hotline: 1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262), 24/7, call or text.
- Thinking about hurting yourself or your baby: call or text 988. Life-threatening: call 911.
- Postpartum Support International HelpLine: 1-800-944-4773. Not a crisis line.

Source: NIMH, "Perinatal Depression."

From joynap.app/blog/newborn-night-shift-schedule. General information only. It isn't a substitute for advice from your baby's doctor. If something feels off, call your pediatrician. In an emergency, call 911.