

Gentler Nights

A calm 14-night plan for baby sleep after the "4-month regression".
Safe, step-by-step and no cry-it-out, for babies from 4 months



Casa Scripta, Edition 1, November 2026.

PLEASE READ THIS FIRST

Disclaimer and notes

> **Not medical advice. General information only. Talk to your pediatrician, doctor or child health nurse about your baby.**

- **General information only, not medical advice.** Talk to your pediatrician, doctor or child health nurse about your baby.
- This book doesn't diagnose, treat or prevent any condition, and it doesn't promise any result for your baby's sleep. It's a gentle 14-night plan, and every baby is different.
- No routine, method or product in this book prevents SIDS or sudden unexpected infant death. Always follow the safe sleep rules in Chapter 3.
- The organizations and researchers cited in this book haven't reviewed or endorsed it.
- This book contains no testimonials or reviews.
- Phone numbers, opening hours and web addresses change. Check current details on the official site.
- The facts in this book come from published research and official guidance available in November 2026. Safe sleep guidance is updated from time to time, so check your national guidance for changes.

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Important: please read first

This book is general information, not medical advice. It doesn't replace advice from your pediatrician, doctor, health visitor, child health nurse or other health professional, who knows you and your baby. If you're worried about your baby's health, contact one of them or your local child and family health service.

In an emergency, call your local emergency number: 911 in the US and Canada, 999 in the UK, 000 in Australia.

> **Safe-sleep basics (every sleep, day and night, until age 1)**
>
> - **Back to sleep:** put your baby down on their back for every sleep (AAP 2022 policy; NHS; Red Nose).
> - **Firm, flat, separate surface:** a crib or bassinet with a firm, flat, well-fitting mattress, in your room for at least the first 6 months, not in your bed or on a sofa (AAP 2022 policy; NHS).
> - **Nothing loose in the crib:** no pillows, comforters, bumpers, soft toys or loose bedding (AAP 2022 policy; Red Nose).
> - **No smoking:** keep your baby away from smoke, before and after birth (AAP 2022 policy; NHS; Red Nose).
>
> The full rules are in Chapter 3.

Call your pediatrician or doctor if your baby snores most nights, pauses or gasps while breathing, or breathes with effort; vomits green or blood, or vomits forcefully; refuses feeds, isn't gaining weight well or seems dehydrated; has a fever or seems unwell; or if their sleep suddenly changes along with signs of illness or pain (RCH, obstructive sleep apnoea; NICE NG1; RCH Kids Health Info). **Call your emergency number now** if your baby has difficulty breathing, or seems very unwell, floppy or unusually drowsy (healthdirect). The full red-flag list is in Chapter 9.

A plan, not a promise. *Gentler Nights* is a gentle 14-night plan. It describes what to do for 14 nights. It doesn't promise any particular result in that time, because every baby is different and no study has tested this plan.

Not endorsed. This book cites the American Academy of Pediatrics, the NHS, the Lullaby Trust, Canada's Joint Statement on Safe Sleep, Red Nose, the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, Raising Children Network and other organizations, and published research. None of them has reviewed or endorsed this book.

Where the facts come from. Every fact in this book comes from published research or official guidance, and each one is cited in the text with a link, so you can check it yourself. When the evidence is thin, we say so plainly.

How strong is the evidence? (our labels)

You'll see these words throughout the book:

STRONG	several good studies, or a review of many studies, agree.
MODERATE	one good trial, or large and consistent observational studies.
WEAK	small trials, single groups of babies, or early findings.
EXPERT ADVICE	official guidance from health organizations without trials behind it. That doesn't make it wrong. It just means nobody has tested it in a study yet.

A QUICK START

How to use this book (in 10 minutes)

IN 10 MINUTES

How to use this book

You're tired, so here's the short version:

1. **Read Chapters 1–4 first.**
   They take about 30 minutes in total. Chapter 3 (safe sleep) is the one you must not skip.
2. **Work out your track**
   using the chooser below.
3. **Go straight to your track:**
   Chapter 5 (from about 4 months) or Chapter 6 (from about 6 months). Each has a one-page plan for each block of nights and a tracker.
4. **On Day 14,**
   do the review in Chapter 7.
5. **Keep Chapter 9 (red flags) and Chapter 11 (where to get help) handy.**
   Snap a photo of them on your phone.

Every worksheet in this book is printable. You'll find them in the section they belong to.

Your plan starts on page 7.

CHAPTER 1

You're not doing it wrong



It's the third waking since midnight. You've fed, rocked, shushed and walked the hallway. Your baby finally drops off on your shoulder, and the moment you lower them into the crib (cot), their eyes snap open. A month ago they were settling fine. Now every week seems a little worse than the last, and you're starting to wonder whether you broke something.

Maybe you're also:

- running on broken sleep and finding it hard to think straight;
- reading conflicting advice at 3am ("drop the night feed", "never let them cry", "keep them up later");
- avoiding outings because they might mess up a nap;
- snapping at your partner, then feeling guilty about it;
- quietly scared that something is wrong with your baby, or with you.

If that's you, take a breath. **You haven't broken anything.** What you're living through is common, it has real reasons behind it (Chapter 2), and there are gentle, safe things you can do about it.

What this book is

Gentler Nights is a short, practical, 14-night plan with two tracks:

- **Track 1 (from about 4 months): gentle foundations.** A consistent bedtime routine, a sleep-friendly room, understanding normal night waking and feeds, and responsive settling. No sleep training.
- **Track 2 (from about 6 months, after checking with your pediatrician): gradual parent-present withdrawal.** You stay with your baby while they learn to fall asleep with less help, and you step back slowly, at your baby's pace.

Safe sleep runs through every page, and it comes first (Chapter 3).

What this book isn't

- **It isn't cry-it-out.** Nowhere in this book will we ask you to leave your baby to cry alone.
- **It isn't a promise that your baby will "sleep through".** Night waking is normal at this age (Chapter 5.1).

- **It isn't a medical program.** If something feels wrong, Chapter 9 tells you when to see your pediatrician, doctor or child health nurse instead.

What 14 nights realistically looks like

We want to be straight with you, because you deserve honesty more than hype. This is **a gentle 14-night plan**: 14 nights of clear steps. It isn't a promise that your baby will be sleeping a certain way by Night 14. Here's what the research actually shows:

- **No study has tested this plan,** and no trial has tested any gentle (no-cry) method in 4–6-month-olds over 14 nights.
- **The two-week evidence comes from older babies.** In a randomized trial, a simple nightly routine improved settling time, night waking and mothers' mood within 2 weeks in babies aged 7–18 months. It was funded by a baby-products company (Mindell et al. 2009). In another trial of children aged 6–36 months, personalized online sleep advice (with or without a routine) improved sleep, with "improvements … seen by one week, with additional benefits by week two" (Mindell et al. 2011).
- **Gentle step-back methods usually take longer.** Australian guidance describes camping out, the method in Track 2, as something that "could take 1-3 weeks" (Raising Children Network; RACGP HANDI). One trial of a responsive, gentle method ran over 8 weeks (Blunden et al. 2022).
- **Progress isn't a straight line.** Expect good nights and rough nights. On Day 14 you'll look at the overall trend, not any single night (Chapter 7).

A word about crying and choice

You may have read that leaving babies to cry harms them. The best long-term evidence doesn't support that fear. A large Australian trial followed families for 5 years after they used controlled comforting or camping out, and found no differences at age 6 in children's emotional health, behavior, stress hormones or closeness with their parents (Price et al. 2012).

Worksheet 4: Track 1 Night-by-Night Tracker

Fill in each morning. It takes two minutes.

NIGHT	ROUTINE DONE? (Y/N)	BEDTIME (LIGHTS OUT)	ASLEEP AT	SETTLED BY (VOICE / PATTING / PICK-UP / ARMS / FEED)	NIGHT WAKINGS	FEEDS	LONGEST STRETCH	MY MOOD (1–5)
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								

One thing that went better this week: _____

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY

- In the first 6 months, babies need to wake at night to feed. Feed whenever your baby seems hungry.
- A short, calm bedtime routine in the same order every night is the backbone of the plan. Put the feed early.
- Watch your baby's tired signs, not the clock. Wake windows are not evidence-based.
- Put your baby down drowsy but awake, then use the lightest help that works: voice, patting, picking up, settling in arms.
- Under 6 months, don't leave your baby to cry for more than a couple of minutes.

CASA SCRIPTA

Gentler Nights

Get the full guide

This sample is the title page, the disclaimer pages, the contents, Chapter 1, and one worksheet. The rest of the guide is on Gumroad:

https://devideg.gumroad.com/l/mhvsc

This page is a sample, not the full book.