

GRADUAL TRANSITION TO COT SETTLING

0-5 months

If your baby is always held or fed to sleep, and you would prefer they fall asleep in their bassinet or cot, then try these gradual steps to transition your baby to cot settling.

Step 1. Introduce sleep associations that *can* transfer to the cot

You cannot feed or hold your baby while they're in their cot, but you can pat and hum. For this step, you're going to continue feeding or holding your baby to sleep, but you will introduce patting and humming. Later on, when you're ready to try cot settling, your baby should adjust more easily because they can hear and feel the same sensations they usually feel when they fall asleep.

Introduce:

- Heart-beat rhythm patting. When you feed or hold your baby to sleep, pat them in a slow heart beat rhythm - "bah-boom...bah-boom..."
- Humming. Hum the same line of a song over and over again.

Stay on step 1 for 1-2 weeks - until you feel it has become a habit for your baby to fall asleep with patting and humming.

Step 2. Settling your baby in their cot

- Follow your usual bedtime routine, but place your baby in their cot awake.
- Pat and hum as you did during step 1.
- Persist for 10 minutes, then pick your baby up for a 2 minute cuddle, before placing them back down in their cot and persisting with patting and humming for another ten minutes.
- Repeat this process until your baby sleeps, if you are comfortable to do so.
- Follow this same process every time you settle your baby.
- Move to the next step when you feel your baby has adjusted to always falling asleep in their cot with patting and humming.

Step 3. Phasing out patting and humming

Start to phase out patting.

- Pat your baby 10 times and then remove your hand from your baby for 10 seconds, and repeat until they sleep. Gradually increase the amount of time you remove your hand, and decrease the number of pats. You can still hum your baby to sleep while you gradually reduce the patting.

Phase out humming.

- When your baby no longer requires any patting in order to fall asleep, phase out humming. The easiest way to do this is to wander out of the room briefly while still humming. Gradually hum more softly and leave for longer periods, until they are falling asleep without needing you to hum at all.

If your baby becomes very upset then stop trying to phase out the patting or humming, and try again in another few days.

The key to success

Aim to be consistent and persistent. When you are predictable it helps your baby feel secure because they know what to expect from you.



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