

STEPS FOR COT SETTling

0-5 months

Follow these steps each time you settle your baby for a sleep. This will help your baby adjust to falling asleep in their bassinet or cot, instead of your arms. It may take several weeks of practice for your baby to easily and quickly fall asleep in their cot, so be prepared to persist.

Steps

1. When you notice tired signs, swaddle your baby or put them in their sleeping bag. Give them their dummy, if they take one.
2. Take your baby in to a dark, quiet room. You might choose to use white noise if your baby is sensitive to the sounds of older siblings, traffic, or pets.
3. Put your baby down on their back in their bassinet or cot.
4. Pat their chest in a slow heart-beat rhythm - “bah-boom...bah-boom...” Do this for two minutes.
5. If after two minutes of patting your baby is upset, then pick them up and cuddle them for a minute. Then place your baby back down and pat again for another two minutes.
6. If after two minutes of patting they seem to be calming down, then persist with patting until they sleep.
7. Repeat this process for 10 minutes at the start of each nap and at bedtime. Or persist until they sleep, if you prefer.
8. If your baby is not asleep after ten minutes, you may choose to pick them up and settle them to sleep with rocking, feeding, or other methods you know will work. This doesn't mean you have failed. You supported your baby through 10 minutes of practice and it all helps.

How does it work?

When you repeat this process every time your baby falls asleep, it starts to become more familiar and less distressing for them. Soon enough your baby will feel ok about falling asleep in their bassinet or cot, and you can work on reducing the amount of patting you do for each settle.

Remember to be predictable so your baby can learn the process – changing what you do will make it take longer for your baby to adjust to falling asleep in their bassinet or cot. A lot of parents will try one approach for a few minutes, then switch to another approach if it hasn't worked. This makes it difficult for a baby to predict what will happen next and they can find this unsettling. When you are calm and predictable, and persist for at least ten minutes each time, you are giving your baby the opportunity to learn the process and what to expect.



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