

Safe ways to feed your baby with a bottle

Paced bottle feeding

Paced bottle feeding is when your baby is in control of how slowly or quickly she eats. This method makes sure that the milk flows slowly from the bottle's nipple into your baby's mouth. This lets your baby take breaks. Below are some tips for paced bottle feeding.

- Hold the bottle for your baby. Do not prop the bottle up.
- Hold your baby upright, with her head above her chest. Hold the bottle straight out and not tilted up.
- Pause for breaks.
- Switch the side you're holding your baby on — even with **bottle feeding!**
- Pay attention to cues that your baby is done eating. This way, you won't overfeed her. Watch to see if your baby is:
 - Slowing down her **suckling**
 - Relaxing her hands and arms
 - Turning her head away from the bottle
 - Pushing the bottle away
 - Falling asleep



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You may choose to bottle feed your baby formula or pumped breastmilk. When you're deciding which type of bottle to use, make sure the **nipple flow** is slow. Your baby will need this until he develops his mouth muscles. A regular bottle nipple allows the breastmilk or formula to come out too fast and some babies have a hard time eating. So, it is easier for you to bottle feed from a slow-flow nipple because his mouth and cheek muscles are developing.

Formula with a bottle

- If you are using formula, prepare it exactly as the instructions say. Always add full scoops of powdered formula instead of half scoops. This will make sure that you're mixing the right amount.
- Always add the powdered formula to the water. Do not add water to the powdered formula. This way, you'll be sure that it is mixed properly. Make sure you're using clean drinking water.
- Do not use more water than the instructions say. Your baby needs the nutrients in the formula and should not be drinking too much water until he is older.
- Do not add cereal or anything else to your baby's bottle. All of the nutrition that your baby needs is in the formula.
- Once you've mixed the formula, use it within an hour. If you don't use it within the hour, put it in the refrigerator. Throw away any formula that you've mixed and that has been sitting out for more than an hour.

Warming formula or breastmilk for a bottle

Do not warm your breastmilk or formula directly on the stove or in the microwave. To warm up cold breastmilk or formula, put the bottle or bag of it into a bowl of warm water. A microwave can heat the formula or breastmilk unevenly. This could cause hot spots that can burn your baby.

Cleaning bottles

Wash your baby's bottles as soon as you are done using them. Here are instructions on how to clean your baby's bottles.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
2. Take the bottle apart and separate the cup, nipple, and ring.
3. Let everything soak in hot, soapy water for a few minutes.
4. Scrub all of the parts. Use a bottle brush to wash the small parts that are hard to reach.
5. Rinse the bottles with plain, clean water.
6. Let all of the parts air dry completely. Using a towel to dry them can add germs.

If you have a dishwasher, read the instructions from your bottle to find out which parts can go into the dishwasher. Use the hot-water and hot-drying (sanitizing) settings, if possible.

Giving your baby a bottle with breastmilk

If you've only been breastfeeding, it will take your baby some practice to get used to a bottle. Here are some tips to make it easier.

- When your baby is about 4 weeks old, ask your partner or a family member to start feeding your baby with a bottle of breastmilk. The bottle should only have about 1-2 ounces of breastmilk in it. This will help your baby learn to take a bottle. It will also help your baby get used to someone else feeding her. If you wait longer than 4 weeks, your baby may not take the bottle or might have a harder time taking it.
- Your baby is used to your nipple. You might need to try different types of bottle nipples to find one that your baby likes.
- Try giving your baby the bottle when she is not too hungry. If your baby is upset, she might not want to try something new.
- Before you go back to work or school, leave your baby for a few hours with the person who will be taking care of her. This will help you and your baby get used to being away from each other. Give your caregiver a bottle with your breastmilk to feed your baby.
- Talk to your caregiver about the process of thawing and preparing your milk, and be sure they know not to put it in the microwave. It might help to bring this book and refer to the steps on the previous pages.

