



From Co-Sleeping or Bedsharing to Crib Sleeping

Is it Time to Move Your Little One Into Their Crib?

Is your current sleeping arrangement no longer working for you? Maybe your baby is waking more, or has trouble falling back asleep. Do you feel like all your little one wants to do now is feed because you are close? It could also be just because co-sleeping (in the bedroom with you) or bedsharing (sharing a bed with you) is no longer enjoyable - your baby is too mobile, the bed is too small, your partner or you are ready for the bed or the room back. The reasons will vary for each parent and little one.

I am going to largely focus on transitioning your baby from bedsharing into sleeping in their own bed. Many of the tips and tricks will work for transitioning them from co-sleeping into their own bed.

Do it For the Right Reasons!

First things first... don't choose to make the transition just because other people are telling you that you need to do it. Make the transition because either you or your baby are ready, or maybe it just isn't working well for your family anymore and a change needs to be made. If co-sleeping or bedsharing is still working just continue to enjoy it until the time comes to change.

Around 6 months old your little one may be too large for a bassinet and a crib and a transition will be necessary. Or the crib transition is necessary to move them out of your bed. Remember room-sharing is recommended for the first year of life to reduce the risk of SIDS.

"Has the person who coined the phrase 'sleep like a baby' ever met a baby?" - Unknown

Will This Transition be Easy?

I am going to be honest, this transition isn't always easy and it takes time. The transition may be harder for the mother... you may shed some tears not having your baby close anymore and you may worry about them more. Your little one is used to being soothed to sleep with their mother close so a gradual transition is beneficial. There is also no ONE right way to make this transition.

Supporting the Transition

- Your little one's sleep environment is important. Be sure that it is a space that they love. You can help them get comfortable with their space in the weeks leading up to the transition by spending time playing in it with lights on and off. You can place them in their crib and play with stuffed animals as though it is a puppet show, leave the room and then come back in doing silly faces or actions that will make them smile or laugh. If they are comfortable and enjoy their sleep space during the day they are more likely to enjoy it at night. Do a lot of getting in and out of the crib during the day to help them become comfortable.
- Adding additional routines to bedtime that give your little one more time in their crib can be beneficial. Maybe do a story while they are in their crib or sing songs. Take it as slow as your little one needs to get comfortable in their space and with being in their crib.
- Once a baby reaches 9 months this transition can be harder for them. They may get really upset with being put to sleep in their crib. Little ones are many times very habitual and moving to a new place to sleep can be a big adjustment. An idea for transitioning older babies into their own space is using a floor bed. This makes it more familiar to what they see in a parents room and this also makes it easier for a parent to lay with them and support them through this transition.

- If your little one has been sleeping in a bassinet and you can safely set it in the crib this could be a first step in the transition. Don't leave them alone in a bassinet inside the crib alone as this isn't safe. Rather do it for a short stretch of sleep at the beginning of the night.
- Placing something in the crib to warm (a warm towel) the mattress and then removing it before laying them down can sometimes make the transition from your arms into the crib easier. Sleeping with your baby's crib sheet for a few nights before placing it on their mattress can give them the familiar smell of their parent they have enjoyed while being close to you.
- You can also start with just putting your baby to sleep in their crib for the first stretch of sleep, even if that is only 15 minutes. Many babies that are younger than 9 months and have a easy-going personality do well with this. After a few days of bringing them back to your room after they wake you can then begin to support them back to sleep in their space after the first wake. Some babies will adjust quickly and others will need more time and extra support.
- Another option is removing one side of the crib, if it can be done safely, and bring the crib into your space to create a side car crib (safely). This allows your baby to practice sleeping in their crib while still being close to you. When they become comfortable with their crib you can then put the side up and eventually transition them to their own space.

Remember to always create a safe place for your baby, especially if you choose to do a floor bed. Be careful to set up a side car crib in a way that they cannot get wedge between the two mattresses.

Tears are okay if you are there to support them through the tears (reach out with any questions on how to do this). Lastly, get support with the transition if needed.

BEDSHARING IS NOT RECOMMENDED, BUT DID YOU KNOW THAT 40-60% OF FAMILIES DO IT AT SOME POINT. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ON HOW TO DO IT AS SAFELY AS POSSIBLE, SCHEDULE A TIME TO CHAT.

LITTLE NOTE: I DIDN'T INTEND TO BEDSHARE BUT IT JUST HAPPENED OUT OF PURE EXHAUSTION. THEN I FEEL IN LOVE WITH IT AND WE CONTINUED TO BEDSHARE UNTIL MY SON WAS 2.5 YEARS OLD. IT WAS WORKED FOR US, SO YOU DO WHAT WORKS FOR YOU. THE ONLY THING I WISH I KNEW WAS HOW TO SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE SAFEST WAY POSSIBLE WHILE WE BEDSHARED.