



Sleep Training for Infants: Choosing a Sleep Training Method

So how do you choose a sleep training approach?

Ask yourself a few key questions.

Firstly, which method is most in line with your parenting philosophy? It's essential to make sure you choose a method that you will be comfortable executing consistently. If you are uncomfortable or anxious about the approach you've chosen, the baby will feed off of your negative energy. So it's really important that you be calm, cool and collected throughout the process.

Another question to ask is, how old is your baby? If you have an older baby with really deep-seeded sleep habits, like a baby who's been nursing to sleep AND co-sleeping for his entire 10 months of life, a direct approach like extinction or Ferber might not be the best approach. It might just be too cold turkey, and I'm not into cold turkey approaches because they're very hard on everyone. So a gentler approach like the Shuffle is probably your best bet. I also recommend using gentler approaches for babies under 5 months of age, only because they're still quite little.

The last question to ask yourself is, what is your child's temperament? Is she calmed by your presence in the room? If yes, use a gradual fading approach. However, if your presence will make matters worse, use a more direct approach.

Here are some other tips to keep in mind when choosing your approach: If you have a baby with a nursing to sleep habit and you are using the Shuffle, it often works better to have dad in the room instead because dad doesn't have breasts. So mom and her breasts are out of sight and out of mind. If you are extremely anxious, don't execute the Shuffle or Pick Up/Put Down yourself. Either have your partner execute these gradually options or choose a different option because you don't want the baby to feed off of any negative energy. If say you start with the Shuffle and realize that it's not the right fit (perhaps you're finding the baby to be too distracted by your presence), feel free to move onto Ferber or the Wave. Just don't switch things up again after that change and that you remain consistent.