

Newborn Only Sleeps on You?

Why it Happens (and What To Try Tonight)

A Gentle Guide for Exhausted Moms



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Why Your Newborn Only Sleeps on You

A Gentle Guide for Exhausted Moms (And What To Try Tonight)

If your baby falls asleep peacefully in your arms...
but wakes the moment you lower them into the bassinet...

You are not alone.
And you are not doing anything wrong.

As a postpartum nurse of 22 years, I can tell you this is one of the most common struggles in the first 0–3 months. Newborns are biologically wired for closeness. Your arms feel warm, safe, and familiar. A cold, still bassinet can feel like a sudden change.

This does not mean:

- You are creating bad habits
- Your baby is stubborn
- You've failed at sleep



It means your baby's nervous system is still developing.
This stage is intense because it is intense.

Take one slow breath. Nothing is wrong.



Why Transfers Wake Your Baby

There are three gentle reasons this happens:

1. The Temperature Change

Your body is warm and moving. The bassinet is cooler and still. Even a small change can trigger alertness.

2. The Startle Reflex

Newborns have a built-in protective reflex that activates when they feel a sudden movement or shift in position. It's not resistance, it's biology.

3. Timing

If your baby is always put down fully asleep they will wake up confused and not be able to go back to sleep on their own without support.

- This isn't stubbornness.
- It's development.
- And development changes.





What To Try Tonight

Instead of trying to “fix” everything, focus on one gentle shift.

Try this:

- 1 Wait until your baby’s body feels relaxed and heavy.**
Their arms should feel loose, breathing steady, they are drowsy but not fully asleep.
- 2 Lower gradually, starting with their lower body.**
Support their body as you ease them down rather than placing their head down first.
- 3 Keep your hand resting softly on their chest for 20–30 seconds**
This helps them feel safe during the transition.

If they stir, try gentle shushing or light pressure before immediately picking them up.

It may not work perfectly every time and that’s ok. Progress comes with repetition.

This can help... But if your baby still wakes the second you put them down, it’s not just one step- it’s the full sequence that matters.

If you're still holding your baby right now...

- Wondering why they wake the second you put them down...
- Feeling exhausted and unsure what to try next...
- Hoping tonight might be just a little easier...

You are not doing anything wrong.
But you also don't have to keep guessing.

When you're ready, here's your next step

This guide helped you understand why this is happening...

But if you want a gentle, step-by-step plan you can follow. I walk you through exactly how to move from contact sleep to bassinet sleep, without stress or doing everything at once.

Inside the full guide:

Exactly when to put your baby down
What to do if they wake right away
How to improve naps and nights



So your baby can start sleeping in the bassinet—even if they only sleep on you right now.

You don't have to figure this out alone

[Get the Step-by-Step Plan](#)