

Bottle Feeding Tips

- **Bottle feeding** can be a warm, loving experience—cuddle your baby closely, gaze into her eyes, and coo and talk to her. Never prop the bottle and let your baby feed alone; not only will you miss the opportunity to bond with her while she feeds, but there's also a danger that she'll choke or the bottle will slip out of position. Propping the bottle also increases the risk of ear infections. We do not recommend devices to hold a bottle in a baby's mouth—they could be dangerous.
- Although some babies will drink a bottle straight from the refrigerator, most prefer milk warmed to room temperature. You can **warm a bottle** by placing it in a bowl of hot water for a few minutes. Sprinkle a few drops on your wrist; it should feel lukewarm. If it's too warm, wait for it to cool a bit and test again.
 - **Note:** Never warm a bottle of formula or human milk in the microwave. The bottle itself may feel cool while the liquid inside can be too hot. Microwaving also heats unevenly. Even though a few drops sprinkled on your wrist may feel OK, some of the formula or human milk may be scalding. The composition of human milk may change if it is warmed too much, as well.
- Make sure the nipple hole is the right size. If your baby seems to be gagging or gulping too fast, the nipple hole may be too large. If your baby is sucking hard and seems frustrated, the hole may be too small.
- Try different nipple shapes to see which your baby prefers. There is no correct shape.
- Angle the bottle so your baby isn't sucking in air. **Burp your baby** a couple of times during the course of a feeding.
- Encourage your partner to feed the baby, perhaps one of the late-night feedings. This not only allows you some extra rest, but it also fosters bonding with your baby.
- Don't let your baby fall asleep sucking on a bottle of milk, especially if she is beginning to **cut teeth**. Milk pooled in your baby's mouth can cause serious **tooth decay**, known as nursing-bottle caries. After feeding and before putting your baby to sleep, gently wipe any milk residue from her gums. If she needs to suck herself to sleep, give her a **pacifier** instead of a bottle.
- Repeated **sterilization** may distort nipple openings. Test to make sure milk flow through the nipple is adequate.

Info shared from American Academy of Pediatrics website [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)

How to Sterilize and Warm Baby Bottles Safely

Parents and pediatricians today are not as concerned with sterilizing bottles and water as they were a generation ago, but many are now having second thoughts in light of recent reports of contaminated city water supplies and increased concern over food safety.

- For starters, always [wash your hands](#) before handling baby bottles or feeding your baby.
- If you use disposable plastic bottle liners and ready-to-use formula, you still need to make sure the nipples are clean. Scrub them in hot, soapy water, then rinse to get rid of all traces of soap; some experts recommend boiling them for 5 minutes.
- Always wash and thoroughly rinse and dry the top of the formula can before you open it; make sure the can opener, mixing cups, jars, spoons, and other equipment are clean.

Glass Bottles & Formula Safety

If you use regular glass bottles and [concentrated or powdered formula](#), you must make sure that the bottles and water added to the formula are germ free. You don't need to boil the bottles; you can put them, along with mixing cups and other equipment used to prepare formula, in a dishwasher that uses heated water and has a hot drying cycle. Or you can wash the bottles in hot, soapy water and rinse thoroughly. This alone should kill most germs.

Mixing with Water

Water for mixing infant formula must be from a safe water source as defined by the state or local health department. If you are concerned or uncertain about the [safety of tap water](#), you may use bottled water or bring cold tap water to a rolling boil for 1 minute (no longer), then cool the water to room temperature for no more than 30 minutes before it is used. Warmed water should be tested in advance to make sure it is not too hot for the baby. The easiest way to test the temperature is to shake a few drops on the inside of your wrist. Otherwise, a bottle can be prepared by adding powdered formula and room-temperature water from the tap just before feeding. Bottles made in this way from powdered formula can be ready for feeding because no additional refrigeration or warming would be required.

Storing Prepared Formula

- Prepared formula must be discarded within 1 hour after serving a baby.
- Prepared formula that has not been given to a baby may be stored in the refrigerator for 24 hours to prevent bacterial contamination.
- An open container of ready-to-feed, concentrated formula, or formula prepared from concentrated formula, should be covered, refrigerated, and discarded after 48 hours if not used.