

Child Care Provider's Tips for Bottle Feeding

1. **Hold the baby during feedings:** Bottle-feed as much like a breastfeeding mother as possible. Ask her to show you how she normally positions the baby during a feeding. **Don't prop the bottle.** Propping a bottle for an infant may cause choking, pneumonia, and possibly death. Look at, touch, talk to the baby during the bottle feedings. When the baby is done, put the bottle away (just like you would with your breast). When the baby is able to crawl or walk, continue to **hold your baby during bottle feedings.** Do not let the baby drag the bottle around (baby can't do this with the breast!).
2. **Change arms:** Switch the baby from your left to your right arm while feeding (as if you were breastfeeding). This will encourage the baby to look in both directions when eating and stimulate head movement/vision.
3. **Bottles are not for cereal or juice:** Only put breast milk, formula or water in the bottle. Never put cereal in a bottle. Infants given cereal in a bottle are at risk of choking, developing food allergies and obesity. If you were breastfeeding, you could not put cereal in the breast! You can spoon feed cereal around 6 months. **Save juice for the cup** at around 7-8 months (same reason, the breast never gives out juice!). CAUTION: all babies have the potential of becoming "juice addicts" because of the sweet taste of juice, so limit juices. High juice intake causes diarrhea and poor nutrition. At 7 months, babies should only get 3-4 ounces (1/2 cup) of diluted juice a day, from a cup.
4. **Feed the baby "on cue":** just as with breastfeeding. When newborns suck their hands, cry or make sucking sounds they are letting you know they are hungry. Babies should not be forced to e
5. at on a schedule, but should follow their own appetite.
6. **Don't overfeed:** Do not "push" a baby to finish the bottle. This can lead to vomiting as well as setting up a habit of overeating throughout life. Allow the baby to stop eating when he/she is full. Babies will stop sucking and turn their head away when they are full. Follow this cue! Remember, we cannot see how much a baby eats when breastfeeding and we cannot force them to keep sucking from the breast. So we should not do that with a bottle!
7. **Keep bottles clean:** Always **wash the bottles very well.** You will need a bottle brush for this and use a small brush or your finger to clean out the nipples well. Don't forget to separate the rings from the nipples and wash well. Follow the formula directions and doctor's recommendation as to whether you need to sterilize bottles and water. Spoiled formula/breast milk left in a poorly washed bottle causes food poisoning, which can be life threatening. Breast milk is sterile as it leaves the mother's body, but cleanliness is still very important if pumped breast milk is placed in the bottle.
8. **Getting baby to the bottle:**
 - a. Try before the baby is too hungry.
 - b. Try different positions, including facing away from you and walking.
 - c. Try different nipples or warming the nipple and the milk under warm water to body temperature.
 - d. Try when the baby is just waking up.
 - e. Try a different child care worker.
 - f. Try different alternate feeding methods, such as spoon, dropper, and cup.

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9. **Mixing/Storage:**

- a. If powdered or concentrated formula is used instead of breast milk read and follow the mixing directions on the can VERY CAREFULLY each time you use it. Formula is sold concentrated, ready-to-feed or in powder form, and each has different instructions.
- b. Never add extra water to formula to make it last longer, this could cause poor nutrition and serious health problems in the newborn.
- c. NEVER add less water than is stated on the directions; this could damage a newborn’s kidneys and liver.
- d. Don’t use distilled water to mix formula. Bottled water is not better than tap water – it does not contain fluoride and tap water does!
- e. If you live in an older building and are mixing tap water with formula, use the cold water and let it run for 15 - 30 seconds to reduce the risk of lead in the water.
- f. If you use a plastic bottle liner, always mix the formula and water BEFORE putting into the bottle. Mix in a measuring cup. The liners are not accurate enough to use as a measuring guide. Put water in measuring cup first, then the powdered formula.
- g. If the baby does not drink all the formula/breastmilk in a bottle, you should NOT save it for another feeding – throw it out if it has been at room temperature for longer than an hour.

10. **When traveling:** Make sure you have unopened ready-to-feed formula or carry water separately from the dry formula or canned concentrate. Do not mix until

ready to use. Keep pumped breast milk chilled until ready to use.

11. **Prevent Baby Bottle Tooth Decay and ear infections:**

Do not put the baby to bed with a bottle of formula or breast milk (if breast feeding, you can’t put your breast in the crib!). Pick the baby up and hold for feedings, then put back to bed without the bottle. This keeps the formula or breast milk from collecting in the mouth while baby is sleeping and causing cavities or ear problems. If the baby becomes attached to the bottle and likes to sleep with it in the crib, you can try a pacifier or put water in the bottle.

12. **Starting regular milk:** Wait until the baby is 12 months old to switch from formula to WHOLE milk. Do not start Fat-free, 1% (extra lite) or 2% (lowfat) milk until after the baby is 2 years old.

13. **Weaning:** Start weaning from the bottle by the time the baby is one year old. Babies who continue to drink large amounts of formula, milk or juice from a bottle after the age of one can become anemic, be poorly nourished, and develop severe tooth decay.

a. Encourage the use of a cup when you introduce diluted juice and solids starting at seven months.

b. When the baby turns one, start cutting out the daytime bottles first, and allow more snacks – they need 3 small meals and 3 small snacks a day.

c. Offer a cup FREQUENTLY. Usually, the bottle before bedtime is the last to go.

d. Start giving a well-liked snack prior to the bottle and dilute the formula until it is just plain water – eventually the baby will prefer the snack, and take the milk from a cup.

