

Getting Your Baby to Use a Cup

Time for a cup! If your baby is between 6 and 12 months old, she or he is ready to start learning to use a cup.

Here are some tips that may help ease your baby's transition to a cup:

1. At around 6 months old, start teaching your baby to use a cup. Try a small plastic cup. You may want to have your baby use a cup with a lid and a handle.
2. Give your baby lots of practice using a cup. Give your baby sips of water, juice, breast milk, or formula from a cup.
3. If you are breastfeeding, offer your baby water in a cup with meals and snacks.
4. If you are bottle-feeding, at around 9 or 10 months old start cutting down on the number of feedings your baby gets from a bottle each day by having your baby use a cup instead.
 - Start by using a cup for the bottle-feeding that your baby is least interested in. After several days or weeks, replace another feeding. Repeat until you have replaced all bottle-feedings with a cup.
 - To eliminate bottle-feeding at nap or bedtime (this is often the most difficult one to stop):
 - Give a bottle with a small amount of water before bedtime if needed.
 - Offer a small snack or beverage from a cup before bedtime.
 - Interest your baby in something other than the bottle, such as a stuffed toy, blanket, bedtime story, song, or back rub.
 - Give a lot of attention and affection.
5. Only offer a cup at meal and snack times. Do NOT allow children to walk around with juice or sweetened fluids in a sippy cup throughout the day since this could lead to tooth decay.