



Child Sleep Consulting  
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## Transitioning Your Toddler From Two Naps to One Nap

Most toddlers are ready to give up their morning nap between 15 and 18 months, and nearly all children go through the “one nap is too little, two naps are too many” phase. All you can do is make the transition as smooth as possible, although even in the best-case scenario, a child may be cranky and out-of-sorts for two or three weeks. Your toddler has reached this milestone when she:

- Consistently gets 10 to 11 hours of uninterrupted sleep at night. If she’s not, work on improving nighttime sleep before you tackle the nap change.
- Consistently takes longer and longer to fall asleep for her morning nap.
- Consistently takes increasingly shorter morning naps or sleeps for too long in the morning and then refuses an afternoon nap.

Once you see these changes in your child’s sleep and nap behavior for at least 10 to 14 days straight, you can start the process of dropping her morning nap. It should take only 7 to 10 days. Here’s how:

1. Gradually push her morning nap later—until around 11:00 a.m. for two days, then 11:30 for a couple of days, then noon, and so on. Don’t let the nap get stuck in late morning. Some kids can adapt more quickly to a noon nap time and others need to go slower. Watch your child. Your goal is for the afternoon nap to start between 12:30 and 1:00 and last at least 2¼ to 2½ hours.
2. If your toddler sleeps for only an hour and wakes up tired, then try to soothe and resettle her back to sleep. If all else fails, use one of your emergency techniques, like putting her in the car or stroller.
3. Do not let her sleep past 4:00 or 4:30 p.m., so as not to disrupt her bedtime.
4. Try to get your child to bed earlier than usual for two weeks or so during the transition—like 7:00 p.m.—to cushion her from being overtired.
5. Be open to an occasional “two-nap day.” If during the transition your child seems too tired, it’s okay to let her nap twice—just limit the morning snooze to 45 minutes.
6. If your child is in childcare or preschool part of the time, try to synchronize the afternoon nap at home with the timetable at school (assuming she starts her nap at school between 12:00 and 1:00 p.m.).



**Gentle Sleep Coach**<sup>SM</sup>  
Trained and Certified by The Sleep Lady<sup>®</sup>

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