

# TRANSITIONING TO BOTTLE FEEDING FROM BREASTFEEDING

Bottle feeding can be an important and necessary resource on your baby's feeding journey. Picking the right bottle for your baby may not be as easy as you think. There are thousands of bottles on the market and picking the right bottle is vital for your baby's growth and development.

There are certain considerations to look for when picking a bottle:

- ✓ Oral restrictions
- ✓ Low or high muscle tone
- ✓ Atypical anatomy structures, including cleft lip or palate

## Timeline

3-4 Weeks Postpartum

**Introduce Bottle:** Babies should maintain the intrinsic sucking reflex on both breast and bottle. If introduced after 10 weeks, they may need to try a variety of bottle nipples.

5-6 Months of Age

**Introduce Open Cup or Straw** to support oral motor development

12 Months & Beyond

**Discontinue Bottle Feeding:** Once babies are consistently consuming solid foods for their nutrition, continue straw and open cup use and gradually wean away bottles.



### What type of nipple is best for my baby during bottle feeding?

Try to match the shape of mother's breast nipple to bottle nipple. Bottle nipple should go in and out of mouth round. A tapered nipple can provide a deeper latch, allowing a wider jaw opening for a baby. A pinched, flat nipple can help get into the palate to trigger a suck reflex. Specialty nipples help support infants with facial abnormalities, including lip or palate clefts.

### What nipple flow is best for my baby?

There is no standardization of nipple flow rate on bottles; each bottle may have its own system. Our goal is to match the oral skills of the baby and match the flow from breast to bottle. If there are signs of choking or gagging, it may be recommended to reduce the flow rate of the bottle nipple. Bottles flow rates typically include premie, slow, medium, and fast.

Matheney, J (2024). *Bottle Feeding Skills: Refining Clinical Reasoning for Selection and Use* [Pre-Recorded Video, Power-Point Slides]. The Lactation OT.

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