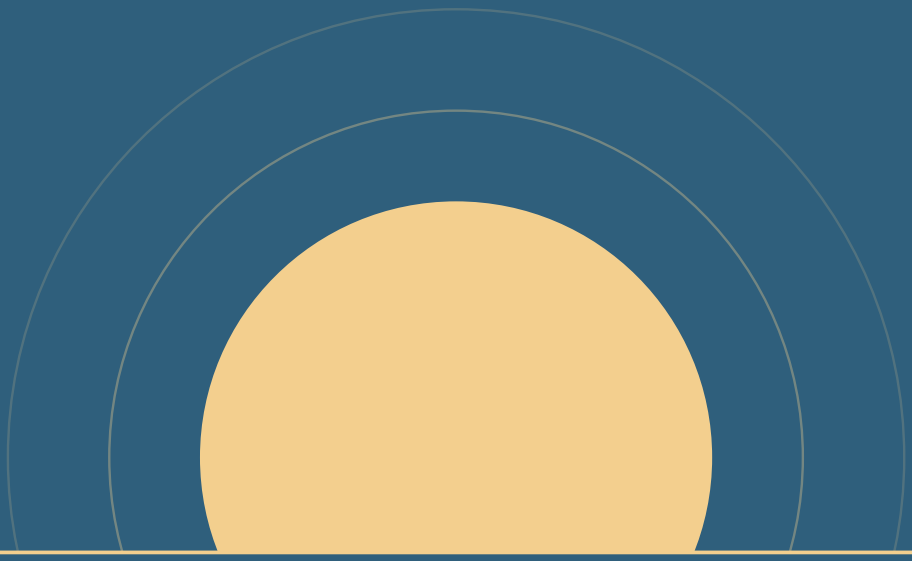
Mamavela

Bottle and Formula Feeding, Calmly

Choosing a formula, making bottles safely, how much and how often, with US and UK advice side by side and printable charts.



Free sample

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Contents

Welcome 3

What this book is, and what it is not 3

US and UK: same baby, different words 4

How to use this book 4

Chapter 1. Your baby, your way: feeding without guilt 5

What the official recommendations say, and why we tell you 5

Families who bottle feed from the start 6

Bottle feeding is closeness too 6

Welcome

Maybe you planned to formula feed from the start. Maybe breastfeeding did not work out the way you hoped, or your body, your medicines, your work or your mental health made the decision for you. Maybe you are combining breast and bottle, or your baby came to you through adoption or surrogacy, or there are two dads in your home and the bottle was always the plan. Whatever brought you here, you are in exactly the right place.

Feeding a baby with a bottle is a real skill. It involves choosing a milk among dozens of tins that look almost the same, learning a preparation routine that has to be right every single time, working out how much and how often, reading a baby who cannot yet tell you anything in words, and doing all of it on very little sleep. Every parent who bottle feeds has stood in front of a kettle at three in the morning wondering whether they got the water right.

This book is here so that you do not have to wonder. It brings together, in one calm and organized place, what the official health bodies of the United States and the United Kingdom actually say about formula and bottle feeding: the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the NHS, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative and the World Health Organization (WHO). When the US and UK advice differ, and on a few points they do, we show you both side by side and explain why, so that you can follow the guidance that applies where you live.

What this book is, and what it is not

This book is information, not medical advice. It cannot examine your baby and it does not know your family's history. It never replaces your pediatrician, your family doctor (GP), your midwife or your health visitor. When something worries you, the right move is always to call them, and you will find that sentence many times in these pages, on purpose.

You will not find any brand recommendations here, because the official sources are clear that all infant formulas sold legally must meet the same standards. You will not find any homemade recipe, because every health body cited in this book warns against them. And you will not find any medicine or supplement doses: those are for your baby's doctor to decide.

You will find the types of formula explained in plain words, how to read a label, step-by-step preparation, cleaning and storage, amounts and rhythms by age, responsive feeding, the common worries (wind, spit-up, poo, allergy), combination feeding, going out and travelling, moving to a cup, a chapter for partners and caregivers, special situations, a chapter about you, and pages to fill in and print.

> **Every way of feeding counts.**
>
> Breast milk, formula, both, expressed milk in a bottle, donor milk: each is a way of loving and nourishing your baby. There is no "lesser" way to feed a child who is fed safely and held with care.

US and UK: same baby, different words

You may hear (US)	You may hear (UK)	What it means
Pediatrician	GP, health visitor	Your baby's routine care and weight checks
Nipple	Teat	The soft part of the bottle your baby sucks
Formula, infant formula	Formula milk, first infant formula	Milk made for babies, usually from cow's milk
Sanitize	Sterilise	Killing germs on clean feeding equipment
Diaper	Nappy	Same thing
Spit-up	Posseting, sick	Milk that comes back up
911	999 (or 112)	Emergency number
Your pediatrician's after-hours line	NHS 111	Urgent advice when you are not sure

How to use this book

You do not have to read it in order. If your baby is not born yet, read Chapters 1 to 5 and fill in the preparation sheet. If you are already feeding, start with Chapter 5 (making up a feed) and Chapter 7 (how much and how often), then go to the chapter that matches today's question. Print the preparation sheet in Chapter 5 for the kitchen wall and the caregiver sheet in Chapter 13 for anyone who looks after your baby.

> A note on words. Health bodies use different words for the people who care for a baby: mother, mum, mom, parent, caregiver. We mostly say "you". Whatever your family looks like, this book is for you.

Chapter 1. Your baby, your way: feeding without guilt

What the official recommendations say, and why we tell you

You have probably heard that health bodies recommend breastfeeding, and they do. The WHO and UNICEF recommend that infants breastfeed exclusively for the first 6 months and continue breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or beyond while safe solid foods are introduced from six months. The AAP recommends exclusive breastfeeding for about 6 months, followed by continued breastfeeding as other foods are introduced, for one year or longer as mutually desired by mother and infant (as quoted by the FDA).

We tell you this not to make you feel bad, but because you deserve honest information, and because European rules ask that any material about infant feeding is clear on a few points. Here they are, plainly:

- Breast milk is the reference food for babies and has health benefits for both baby and parent that formula cannot copy. The NHS says formula "does not have the same health benefits as breastfeeding for you and your baby" and "cannot protect your baby from infections".
- Introducing formula feeds can reduce how much breast milk you make. If you are breastfeeding and want to keep going, introduce formula gradually and get support (Chapter 11).
- Stopping breastfeeding is not always easy to reverse, although restarting is possible, as the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly leaflet explains: your supply naturally reduces once you are not breastfeeding, "but it can increase again to meet your baby's needs".
- Formula costs money, every week, for many months (Chapter 3 has the official help with costs).
- Formula that is prepared or stored the wrong way can make a baby ill. That is why preparation gets its own chapter.

And here is the other half of the truth, which public health messages sometimes forget to say out loud: formula is a safe, strictly regulated food. The FDA calls infant formula "an important source of nutrition for many babies in the U.S., whether used exclusively or in combination with breastfeeding", and notes that "many infants in the U.S. rely on infant formula for some or all of their nutrition". The AAP writes that infant formula "can provide excellent nutrition when families can't or choose not to breastfeed".

> **A choice, a necessity, or both.**
>
> Some parents choose formula from day one. Some need it because of their health, their medicines, their baby's health, a previous difficult experience, their work or simply because breastfeeding hurt too much. Some combine. All of these are real reasons, and you never owe anyone an explanation.

Families who bottle feed from the start

- **Adoptive parents and parents through surrogacy.** Bottle feeding is often the main way to feed, from the very first day. Ask the maternity team or your pediatrician to show you a first feed before you go home, and keep this book's preparation sheet (Chapter 5) close.
- **Two dads, single dads and co-parents.** Everything in this book applies to you exactly as written. The NHS notes that babies "will feel more secure if most feeds are given by you, your partner or their main caregiver": that is you.
- **Parents who cannot breastfeed for medical reasons.** Your doctor will tell you if a condition or a treatment means breast milk is not advised. Formula is then the safe and loving choice.
- **Parents who stopped.** Whether at three days or three months, you fed your baby. Now you will feed your baby with a bottle. Nothing about your bond depends on the milk.

Bottle feeding is closeness too

The NHS describes bottle feeding as "a chance to feel close to your baby and get to know and bond with them", and suggests you sit comfortably with your baby close to you, "look into their eyes and talk to them as you feed them". Skin-to-skin contact is for every family, not only for breastfeeding ones. Holding your baby against your chest, especially in the early weeks, is calming for both of you.

> **Is this normal? Feelings about feeding**
>
> - **Very common:** feeling sad, relieved, guilty or all three after stopping breastfeeding; feeling judged by a comment from a relative or stranger; worrying that you are doing it wrong in the first weeks.
> - **Worth talking about soon:** guilt or sadness about feeding that does not lift, that stops you enjoying your baby, or that keeps you awake. Tell your midwife, health visitor, GP or OB-GYN. Chapter 15 has support lines.

End of the sample

Thank you for reading this far. We hope these first pages already feel useful, and that you can see how the rest of the book is built: clear steps, pages to fill in, sources you can check.

The full book has 52 pages.

Get it here: https://mamavela.com/shop/bottle-formula-feeding-guide/

One-time payment, instant PDF.