

The Cup Transition Roadmap

Bottle to Sippy to Straw to Open Cup — by age

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General information, not medical advice. Every baby's timeline differs — for reflux, a chronic condition, or any sign of a feeding or motor delay, build a plan with your pediatrician.

Age	Cup to reach for	What you're doing	Why it matters	Milestone
0–6 mo Bottle / breast stage	Breast or bottle only	Milk or formula is the whole job. No cup or extra water yet — cup readiness comes with solids around 6 mo.	AAP: breast milk or formula is the sole source of nutrition for about the first 6 months.	Good head & trunk control; watches you drink.
6–9 mo First sips	Small open cup (you hold) + straw cup; bottle still primary	A few sips at meals as skill practice (lips, tongue, grip), not hydration. Only a little water (AAP: no more than about 1/2–1 cup/day until age 1); milk stays the main nutrition.	AAP: you can offer a cup around 6 mo; early reps build mouth skills.	Sips from a held open cup (messy!); brings straw to mouth.
9–12 mo Daily practice	Open + straw cup daily; valve-free sippy optional	Make a cup a fixture at every meal. Start trimming daytime bottles, keeping a couple at meals.	You're building toward weaning — many families skip the sippy entirely.	Holds a cup two-handed; drinks from a straw on their own.
12–18 mo Weaning window	Straw + open cup primary; bottle phasing out	Actively wean the bottle — drop nap & bedtime bottles last. Whole milk now goes in a cup.	AAP: complete the move off the bottle between 12 and 18 months (teeth, weight, speech).	Off daytime bottles; manages an open cup with a little help.
18–24 mo Open-cup shift	Open cup is the everyday cup; straw for on-the-go	Open cup at home meals; keep lidded straw cups for car & outings. Retire any remaining sippy.	AAP: healthiest to be drinking from an open cup by about age 2.	Drinks from an open cup with only the occasional spill.
24 mo+ Big-kid cup	Open cup by default; lidded/straw only for spill control	Open cup is just "the cup" now. Keep a lidded option for car or daycare, not daily home use.	Feeding therapists note open-cup drinking supports a mature swallow & clearer speech.	Confident, independent open-cup drinking.

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