



The “Good Enough” Bedtime Wind-Down

A flexible 15–40 minute sequence that works even when life is messy

Connection > perfection. The goal is not a perfect sequence — it’s helping your child feel safe enough to let the day go. Some nights will be smooth. Many won’t. That’s normal.

1 Signal the shift

Dim lights if you can, but don’t stress if the room stays bright. Soft voice + slower movements is enough. Optional: a short “day is done” song or phrase you both know.

2 Body reset (whatever works tonight)

Warm bath, quick wipe-down, or just a clean diaper + fresh pajamas. Skip the bath on hard nights. Warmth and clean clothes still help the body settle.

3 Same tiny ritual, same order (most nights)

Pajamas, then teeth (or wipe), then diaper/pull-up. Doing these three things in the same order every night is the real anchor — more powerful than any fancy routine.

4 One short, low-pressure connection moment

Choose one (or none if everyone’s exhausted): one short story, a familiar song, looking at a few photos from the day, or just sitting together for a minute. Soft voice. No performance needed.

5 The “I’m here” moment

A short cuddle or hand on their back/chest and a simple phrase: “Day’s finished. I’m right here.” (or whatever words feel natural to you).

6 Into bed while still a bit awake

Put them down when they’re drowsy but not fully out. Some nights they’ll settle quickly. Other nights they’ll need a few extra minutes of presence. Both are okay.

The realistic parent notes (the part that makes it less scary)

- Consistency is the order and the feeling, not the exact minutes.
- Some nights take 12 minutes. Other nights take 45. Neither is failure.
- If one step is a battle, drop it for that night. Protect connection more than the checklist.
- New routines usually take 1–3 weeks to feel normal. Expect pushback at first.
- You don’t need special lights, perfect baths, or the “right” books. Calm presence is the main ingredient.
- It’s okay if you feel tired or just going through the motions some nights. Kids still benefit.

Made for real parents of 1–3 year olds · Good enough is more than enough

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