

Quiet time — one stretch without the phone.

Tape this where you actually stand. Ages soft — use what fits your house. Skip any row that doesn't help today.

STEP	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE
Start	Phones in a bowl or drawer. Soft light. Same chair or rug if you have one.
Settle	Bathroom + water for the adult. One blanket or pillow in the quiet corner.
Offer	Two choices only: books / blocks / quiet tray. Let them pick.
Stretch	You stay nearby — kitchen counter, laundry fold, sit with a book. Not a disappearing act.
Close	Timer soft or a song ending. Hug, water, next thing. No scoreboard.

Permission note: If the house is already loud, stop after Settle. The chart is a friend, not a boss.

FRIDGE CHECK (optional)

- ☐ Phones parked
- ☐ Water for me
- ☐ Two quiet choices out
- ☐ Corner clear enough to sit

Quiet corner reset

Three to five put-backs. Not a deep clean. The corner should invite a sit — not a scavenger hunt.

1. Toys that light up or scream go in a bin outside the corner.
2. Keep two soft choices visible: books, blocks, nesting cups, a quiet tray.
3. Blanket or pillow where a small body can land.
4. Clear a palm-width of floor so knees have room.
5. Lamp low or curtain soft — no overhead glare if you can help it.

Done when you can sit there without kicking a pile. If you only finish steps 1–2, that still counts.

Snack plate — already-accepted foods

Quiet time isn't a nutrition class. Put out what they already eat. Skip the new flavor fight.

BUILD A SMALL PLATE (pick 2–3)

- ☐ Something crunchy they already like (cracker, toast strip, apple slice)
- ☐ Something soft (yogurt pouch, banana, cheese)
- ☐ Water in a cup they can lift
- ☐ One napkin — not a picnic kit

Serve it before the stretch starts so you're not mid-negotiate when the house needs quiet. If they're not hungry, water only is fine.

Not for: choking-risk experiments, sugar as a timer bribe, or a full meal masquerading as quiet time.

Screen-free activity strip

Five to seven concrete offers. Circle two before you start. Leave the rest for another day.

■ **Blocks or cups**

Stack, knock, restack. Same set every time is a gift.

■ **Board books**

A short pile in reach — not the whole shelf.

■ **Quiet tray**

Stickers, chunky crayons, one paper. Lid on when done.

■ **Soft animals**

Two, not twelve. A nest on the blanket.

■ **Puzzle or nesting**

One familiar puzzle beats a new box.

■ **Window watch**

Sit together. Name one truck, one bird, one cloud.

■ **Slow walk loop**

Hallway or yard once — shoes optional if indoors.

No light-up dump. No app “just this once” unless that’s truly your plan for the day.

One-room tidy

One room only. Bag, lamp, floor. You're making space for quiet — not winning a cleaning contest.

1. Grab a bag or basket. Anything that doesn't belong in this room goes in — mail, socks, the mystery truck.
2. Lamp or light: set it to the soft notch you'll want in ten minutes.
3. Floor: clear a sit-spot big enough for a small person and you nearby. Kick the rest to the edge.
4. Trash the crumb pile and the dried wipe. That's enough surfaces.
5. Stop when the sit-spot exists. The rest of the house can wait.

Timer tip: set ten minutes for yourself. When it rings, you're done even if the basket isn't full.

Partner handoff — one liner

Screenshot it. Text it. You don't owe a speech.

I'm on quiet time for twenty minutes. Text if you need me — otherwise I've got this stretch.

Alts if twenty minutes is wrong for today:

- I've got the next song cycle — phones in the bowl.
- Quiet corner is set. I'll wave if I need a swap.
- Taking the hallway loop. Back before the kettle boils.

Optional footnote (pack works without buys): If the wipe pack or snack pouch is empty and you're already restocking, search fragrance-free wipes or a simple snack pouch on Amazon with tag kindcradle-20 — Kind Cradle may earn a small commission. Disclosure: affiliate links support the site.

Print what helps. Skip the rest. A quiet hour without a phone plan is still allowed even if the PDF stays in the download folder.