

Equipment for Babies

You may have seen huge lists of recommended items for baby. You may be overwhelmed thinking you need "all that stuff" for a baby. Remember those lists are made by stores that want to sell you stuff, or by magazines that want to sell ads to companies that sell stuff. Remember humans survived for a long time without most of that!

In this handout, we list "essentials", "nice to have" items, and some optional frills. You can also ask your friends, family, and co-workers for advice. Instead of purchasing new, check out kids' consignment stores, or get hand-me-downs from friends or from "buy nothing" groups. It's easier on the wallet and on the environment. You can also borrow and get hand-me-downs from friends. Babies tend not to wear anything out before they outgrow it.

Feeding. Breast-Feeding / Chest-Feeding

- Essential: A willing and able parent. A way to learn about how to breastfeed (e.g. books, videos, websites). A list of lactation consultants, breastfeeding groups or phone hotlines to call for support if needed.
- Nice to have: A breastfeeding class. Nursing pads, bras you can nurse in (nursing bra, or soft cup bra you can pull aside to expose nipple), clothes you can nurse in (shirt you can lift up to uncover breast)
- Extra frills: Nursing pillow (boppy, my breastfriend, etc. Or just use regular pillows.). "Hooter hider" (or just use a blanket). A book (e.g. The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding) or favorite websites. (www.Illi.org; www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding). Soothies pads or Lansinoh cream if needed for sore nipples.
- Not required: nipple shields (only buy if recommended by lactation consultant).

Pumping and Bottle-Feeding

- Essential for bottle-feeding: 3 or 4 small bottles (4 or 5 ounces) for feeding. Buy one each of three brands, so you can test them out and see which one your baby likes best. For pumping: choose a manual pump if you only need to pump about once or twice a day. Choose an electric pump if you will be pumping multiple times a day and want to maximize your milk supply. You can rent a hospital grade pump, or buy an electric pump. Something to store milk in (e.g. breastmilk storage bags or glass jars).
- Nice to have: Bottle brush for hand-washing bottles; dishwasher basket for small bits.
- Frills: Bottle warmer – or just use a cup of warm water. Bra or bustier that holds the pumps for hands-free pumping – or make one by cutting slits in an old bra. Insulated bags and ice packs for transporting milk.
- Hint: with breastmilk or formula, a typical baby consumes about 2.5 ounces per day per pound he weighs.
- Solid Food Supplies (bowls, spoons, etc.) and high chair can wait. You won't need those till 6 months.

Feeding the Parents

- Before baby is born, stock up on foods that 1) you can eat with 1 hand while holding a baby, 2) don't need to be prepped, 3) are good hot or cold, 4) don't spoil when left out for a few hours, and 5) you like to eat.

Hygiene. Diapers:

- Wash your own: You'll need 50 - 60 diapers 6 covers Bin for dirty (Note: some online diaper companies let you rent a trial kit for a month.) Search online for great tips on washing your own.
- Cloth Diaper Service: You should call to arrange service one month before due date: Buy 6 covers
- Disposable: Have a 2 week supply (120 diapers) in stock before baby comes
- Wipes: Washcloth & water? Or diaper wipes? Diaper cream - optional
- Trash Bin. Changing table and pad? (Optional. Could just use folded towels on top of counter.)
- Diaper bag: includes small container of wipes, changing pad, bag for dirty diapers, bag for wet clothes
- Not recommended: baby oil, baby powder

Bathing and other hygiene

- Baby bathtub? (Optional. Could just take baby in the bath or shower with you, or bathe in sink)
- Towels, washcloths, and a mild soap (you don't have to use special baby items, regular towels work fine)
- Baby nail clippers/scissors Bulb syringe or Nosefrida Snotsucker?

Sleep

- Essential: Planned sleep location: crib, bassinet, co-sleeper, parent's bed. Knowledge of safe sleep practices: www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/sids; <https://cosleeping.nd.edu/safe-co-sleeping-guidelines/>
- Nice to have: Waterproof mattress pad, and 3 sheets. Pajamas or sleep sack (or baby could just sleep in a onesie, although onesies are not flame retardant). Light-weight receiving blankets for swaddling
- Frills: white noise machine or some sort of lullaby music-player. Monitor? (You won't need one if you live in a small house or apartment and can easily hear noises between rooms.) For cloth diapering parents: plan to use a diaper liner or double-diaper (two diapers in the cover) for overnight.
- Not recommended: bumpers, sleep positioners, pillows, thick comforters, stuffed animals for bed.

Clothes for Baby

How much you need of each item depends on the season. Summer babies can get by with onesies, a few sleepers, and some light receiving blankets. Winter babies may need more sleepers and warm outfits, plus a jacket, and a nice warm blanket for stroller rides or the car seat. Hint: Parents often wonder how warmly to dress a baby. A general rule of thumb is to dress your baby like you're dressed, then add 1 layer – maybe a hat or a light blanket.

How many clothes you need also depends on how often you want to do laundry: Expect a newborn to go through two to four outfits every day (due to spit-up, diaper blow-outs, etc.) If you expect to do laundry a couple times a week, that means 9 outfits could come in handy. Here's a general suggestion for what to buy:

Onesies (6+): Sleepers (3+): Socks (3+): Outfits (3+): Hat (1): Jacket (1):
Laundry stain remover Mild, unscented detergent (doesn't need to be special baby detergent)

Car Seat, Safety, and Health

Car Seat Info: nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats; healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/on-the-go

Buy a seat at least 1 month before due date. Practice putting seat in car, and learn how to put baby in seat

Do initial childproofing: Dispose of un-needed chemicals and hazardous items Get a gun safe and medicine safe if needed. Turn water heater down to 120°

Choose baby's doctor before the birth: _____

Take a baby safety class and/or first aid & CPR class. Choose a book or website you trust for health info.

Digital Thermometer: First Aid kit Any other supplies your dr. recommends: _____

Baby Hang-Outs and Transportation

Slip, Wrap (e.g. Moby Wrap), or front-pack

Stroller: frame that car seat clicks in to, or baby carriage, or smaller "umbrella" stroller. Optional. (Note: it is not recommended to jog with a baby in a stroller until baby is able to support his or her head.)

Optional items: Bouncer?? ____ Swing?? ____ Jumper?? ____ Exersaucers?? ____ Playpen?? ____

Toys, Fun, and Games

For the first several months of baby's life, their favorite activity is interacting with adults. Their favorite "toys" are any everyday object that is safe for them to look at, and to hold. We have seen babies have great fun with spoons, measuring cups, toothbrushes, cardboard boxes, plastic containers waiting to be recycled, and so on.

When your baby reaches 3 – 4 months, some "teethers" – small toys that are easy to hold and safe to gnaw on.

For a baby 6 – 18 months, try to choose a wide variety of toys that help develop a variety of skills: Board books for language skills. Nesting / stacking cups and shape sorters to develop spatial awareness, and practice putting things in and taking them out. Music to listen to, musical instruments to play, and songs to learn together. Balls to throw; and things to climb on or into (cardboard box!) for developing big motor skills. Dolls and stuffed animals to practice nurturing. Scarves for peek-a-boo and "dress-up". Most important is your attention – almost anything can be fun for a baby to play with and explore when their parent is by their side sharing the experience with them.

Brain development is supported by 3 key things: Novelty (new experiences), Repetition (doing the same thing over and over till they master it), Down Time (quiet time and rest to process all the new learning).